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Graham's last major international event ..... see p. 24

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55th year of publication

# Forum explores challenges, rewards of cross-cultural ministry

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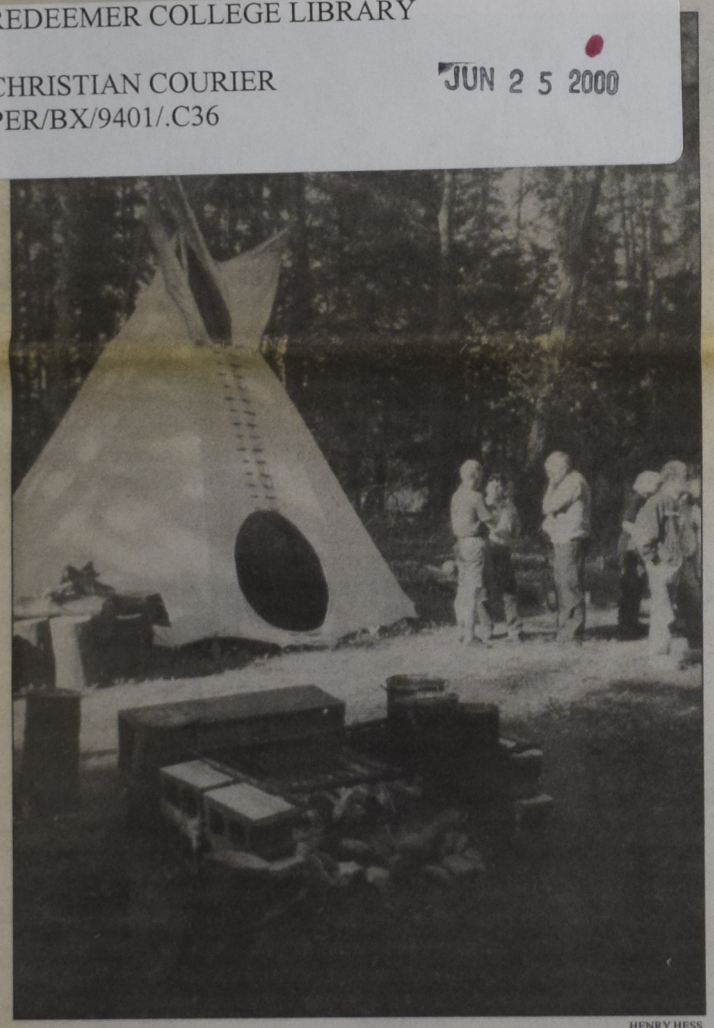


HENRY HESS

*The cultural camp, run by the Edmonton Native Healing Centre.*

**Henry Hess**

EDMONTON, Alta. — Bringing the good news of Jesus to people of different cultures requires sensitivity, understanding and most of all an open and loving heart, delegates to a Christian Reformed Church forum on cross-cultural ministry heard.

## Syncretism dangerous

At the same time, they were cautioned that syncretism — the combining of different beliefs or practices — is like mixing water and gasoline. "You can't drink it and it isn't good for running your car," said Rev. Ray Aldred, a native Canadian who is director of the First Nations Alliance Christian Fellowship in Regina, Sask.

The forum, held at King's University College, Edmonton, June 1-4, brought together a diverse group of almost 60 people from across Canada and the United States to reflect on the role that culture plays in the way we worship God.

It was sparked by an Alberta congregation's concern that the CRC's ministry to native people in Canada had strayed from the gospel by adopting the use of symbolic cleansing rituals such as smudging and the sweat lodge. But what started as a report card on the faithfulness of the CRC's native ministries turned into a celebration of diversity, reconciliation and fellowship.

## Ministry started in Acts 15

Cross-cultural ministry "is a conversation that started in Acts 15," at the first assembly of the Christian church, "and hasn't finished yet," Peter Borgdorff, the CRC's Executive Director of Ministries, told delegates.

Rev. Aldred set the tone for the conference during the opening session by challenging the church to open its heart. "When we exchange hearts, when we give each other our hearts, then cross-cultural ministry becomes something quite different," he said.

He challenged Christians to approach other cultures with a willingness to learn rather than an attitude of superiority. But we must look carefully at how a symbol is being used, he added later. "Does what we are doing lead people to a deeper relationship with Jesus?"

## Sharing and healing circle

The forum heard a variety of viewpoints during panel discussions in which participants spoke from their own experiences of other cultures. It also provided opportunities to experience other styles of worship. Staff from the CRC's three native ministry centres led delegates in worship that included the circle, a forum for sharing and for healing relationships, and smudging, a purification ritual that uses smoke from a mixture of sweetgrass, sage, cedar and tobacco to prepare for worship.

During small-group discussion, delegates sought to identify guiding principles or best practices for cross-cultural ministry. These included identifying the source of a practice; discerning how it relates to biblical principles; examining how our own culture affects our worship; and honestly seeking to understand. Practices to avoid include assuming that we understand other people without committing

*See* **ASSESS** *page 2...*

# *New foundation encourages struggling Christian schools*

**Alan Doerksen**

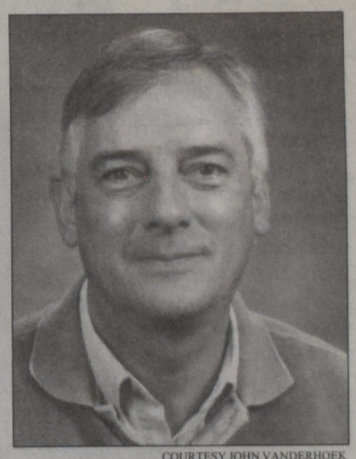
PENTICTON, B.C. — John Vanderhoek believes that Christian schooling is as important for children in communities where Christian schools do not exist or are struggling as it is in areas where Christian schools are flourishing. That's a key reason why he helped start up the Christian Schools Development Foundation (CSDF).

Vanderhoek first caught a vision for setting up the foundation several years ago, when he was asked to help out at Penticton Community Christian School (PCCS). At that time, he says, "it looked as though [the] school would disappear from the scene." But for the past two years, Vanderhoek has worked with the school, and is now chairman of its board.

## Almost ready to close

Just before Vanderhoek starting working with PCCS, "our school was almost ready to close," explains Principal Rebecca Swier. "We had 21 students. He was willing to 'come over to Macedonia and help us.'"

Although the school had a vision statement, it was being ignored. But Vanderhoek "really helped us to get on the bandwagon with the vision," says Swier. "He was here as our principal for two years. He's still my mentor." Vanderhoek also helped the school's board and committees to function more efficiently.



COURTESY JOHN VANDERHOEK

*John Vanderhoek, executive director of the Christian Schools Development Foundation.*

Recently, an anonymous donor asked Vanderhoek to set up a foundation that could help out struggling Christian schools. At this point, the donor (who Vanderhoek says does not wish to reveal his/her identity) is supplying all funds for CSDF. But the foundation has just been granted charitable status

*See* **FOUNDATION** *page 2...*

News

# *Foundation wants flourishing school communities to help new ones*

*... continued from page 1*

by the federal government, he reports, so people can now make donations and get charitable receipts.

### Playgrounds, technology

CSDF aims to improve operational procedures and structures of Christian schools, and to provide them with leadership and staff development opportunities, and adequate facilities such as playgrounds and technology. The primary way the foundation can help is by offering financial grants, explains Vanderhoek, who is executive director of CSDF.

"I'm working on my own, but I'm responsible to a board of directors," he explains. The board is made up of local Penticton people, including a former chair of the PCCS and a local youth pastor.

Vanderhoek is prepared to offer leadership development as a consultant to Christian schools. He also suggests that the foundation could support newly-retired Christian teachers who are interested in leadership development work. The foundation can also provide funds to send teachers to training conferences.

"Developing a deepened understanding of a Christian perspective on education is the responsibility of each Christian school teacher," states a CSDF brochure. "Such an understanding does not come through osmosis. It requires constant communal reflection and the challenge of thought-provoking courses, workshops, institutes and reading. CSDF recognizes the need for teacher growth and development and wants to assist Christian schools in helping their teachers access such opportunities."

Provision of adequate facilities, such as computer technology and playgrounds, "can be a difficult task for Christian school communities," states the brochure. "It is especially in the provision of creative playground structures and current technological capacity that smaller Christian schools with small supporting communities have difficulty."

### Small B.C. school helped

Already, CSDF has offered a grant to Horseshoe Bay Christian School, a small school in West Vancouver, "allowing school leaders the opportunity to attend a conference dealing with promoting Christian schools," explains Vanderhoek. "Several other grant applications have been received and the board of directors will be reviewing these in the near future to determine which it can approve for funding.... I hope that people whom the Lord has blessed financially will catch the vision and contribute to the effort to support the development of good Christian schools in all areas of Canada and the world."

Maureen Cameron, administrator of Horseshoe Bay Christian School, says the grant her school received from CSDF was needed because the school is small, with only 20 students. The school, which has been operating for 10 years, offers Kindergarten to Grade 12. "The grant was for providing teachers with seminar/conference opportunities: professional development." says Cameron.

Schools interested in applying to CSDF for grants should send in a plan as well as a request for funds, explains Vanderhoek.

Vanderhoek stresses that "CSDF is not at all interested in supplanting current Christian school associations. It only wants to support the work being done to strengthen the cause of Christian education everywhere.... We're not interested in establishing another SCSBC [Society for Christian Schools in B.C.] or OACS [Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools] at all." He adds, "we are not tied to one brand of Christian schools."

### Catch a vision

Vanderhoek asserts that he wants people to "catch a vision for Christian education.... If we believe that Christian schooling is important for Christian children in communities in which Christian schools are flourishing, it seems to me that it is equally important for children in communities in which Christian schools do not exist or are struggling. I believe that the Lord calls members of established Christian school communities to support those who are new or those who are struggling."

He notes, "Here's an opportunity to see Christian schools grow in other areas. It's like a missionary activity. Christian school parents in small communities deserve a school for their kids."

At present, the foundation's area of focus is "basically B.C.," says Vanderhoek, but the foundation is open to requests for help from elsewhere in Canada.

"The word that this foundation exists is getting out," Vanderhoek observes. "When I talk with Christian leaders, I generally get a favorable response."

Swier asserts that the foundation is "absolutely" a valuable help for schools such as those which are "not in the Lower Mainland area" of B.C. "The finances that the foundation is providing are invaluable to small schools [where] things like extra money for professional development are way down on the list."

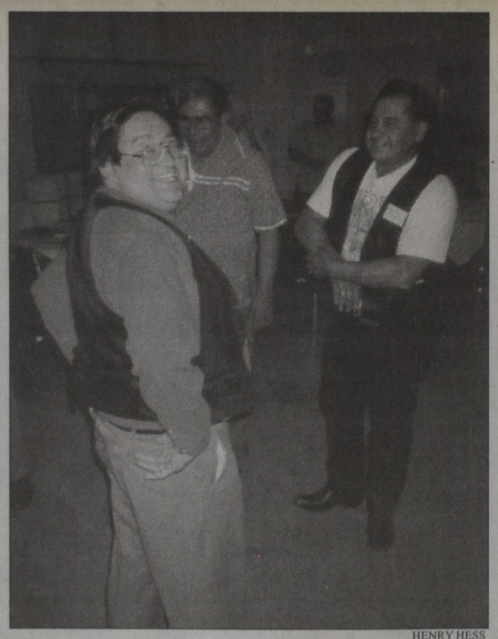
Vanderhoek is focussing full-time on his work with CSDF. Previously, he taught at Christian schools in Ontario, Alberta and B.C. "This is a career change at the age of 60," he observes.

# Assess native ceremonies carefully, says CRC leaders

*... continued from page 1*

ourselves to listening, attacking one another, secrecy and gossip.

As part of a discernment panel near the end of the forum, Ed Vanderveer of the Canadian Ministries Board urged the Christian Reformed Church to help its native ministry centres in Edmonton, Regina and Winnipeg to do what they do best.



HENRY HESS

*Fellowship at the Cross-Cultural Ministry Forum. From left, Leo Beaulieu, Ted Charles, Clarence Malcolm.*

The CRC has been involved in native ministries in Canada for more than a quarter-century, Mr. Vanderveer noted, but the mandate has often been misunderstood as church planting rather than ministering to needs. "Allow the ministries to grow, to build a safe place, a healing place, a helping place," he said. The result "doesn't have to look like my CRC in Ottawa."

In a paper prepared for the conference, Bert Adema, director of the CRC's Indian Metis Christian Fellowship in Regina, posed questions to consider in assessing whether a ceremony, teaching or artifact has any place in Christian worship. Among them are: Does it help us to love God? To love our neighbours? To proclaim Christ? To claim the fruits of the Spirit?

Afterwards, delegates described the forum as a good beginning. "I'm encouraged by much of what I heard," Mr. Borgdorff said. He said it showed that aboriginal communities are struggling with the very same issues the CRC has questions about, such as what it means to be faithful to the gospel and how we hold each other accountable.

He said a report from the forum would go to the CRC's Board of Trustees in September.

***Henry Hess is Communications Director of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.***

# Synod president DeVries gives 'pointers to live by'

**Henry Hess**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — In his opening address to Synod 2000, Michael DeVries expressed his hope that delegates to Synod would be like the believers in Acts 1: "Obedient to the Lord, one in Christ, and constantly in prayer."

DeVries said he is "honored" and "humbled" by his election. "I retire on June 25 of this year. I feel this is my final hurrah in my 38 years of active ministry."

This is the second time DeVries serves as president of Synod. He has been a delegate to Synod six times and served as president in 1997. DeVries is pastor of Pillar Christian Reformed Church in Holland, Mich.

Synod elected Norman Meyer as vice-president. Meyer is pastor of Brookside CRC in Grand Rapids, Mich., and has been a delegate to synod seven times.

On June 12, delegates to Synod 2000 gave a standing ovation for the 34 candidates for ministry who graduate from Calvin Theological Seminary this year. All the candidates, who include men and women from Canada, Honduras, Korea and the United States, were reviewed by the advisory committee to synod on educational matters. Jim DeJong, president of Calvin Theological Seminary, said the advisory committee will recommend to synod later this week that all 34 candidates be approved for ministry.

CC FILES

*Michael DeVries*

Synod President DeVries gave eight "pointers to live by" to new candidates, in light of his retirement June 25:

"1. Be flexible, and you will never be bent out of shape.

2. God gave you two ears and one mouth. A little hint from God?

3. Don't sweat the small stuff. Keep on praying 'thy Kingdom come.'

4. Quit counting nickels and noses. Numbers never tell the whole story.

5. Proclaim good tidings. Please avoid whining and chiding.

6. Leave room in your day planner for God to surprise you.

7. Have a shepherd's heart, a scholar's mind, and the hands of a servant.

8. Stay the course. Hang in there, and remember: Old preachers don't die, they just go on to pastor."

News

# *Trinity Western University submits its legal defense on way to the Supreme Court*

***"On June 29, 1996, the British Columbia College of Teachers (BCCT) denied the application of Trinity Western University for certification of its teacher education program without evidence and in a manner that exceeded its jurisdiction. The BCCT discriminated against TWU and the members of its community. It has attempted to justify its decision on the basis of stereotypical presumptions concerning TWU, the members of its community and its graduates." (Excerpt from TWU's legal argument)***

**CC Staff (from a *TWU press release*)**

LANGLEY, B.C. — Trinity Western University's (TWU) legal challenge concerning certification of its teacher education program is getting closer to the final hearing by the Supreme Court of Canada.

TWU's legal team has now completed and filed with the Supreme Court of Canada its legal response to the appeal arguments submitted by the British Columbia College of Teachers (BCCT). The legal team has been working over the last months to assess the BCCT's arguments, review past rulings and carefully prepare TWU's case for the highest court in the land.

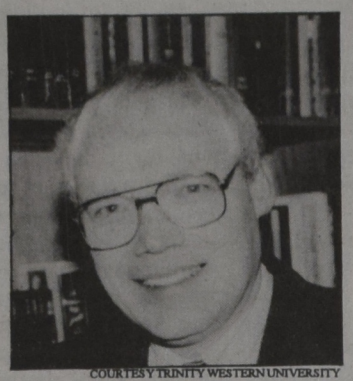
### Vital religious freedom principles

Trinity Western's "Respondent's Factum" represents the articulation and defense of vital religious freedom and civil liberty principles upon which the nine high court justices will make a final ruling, and from which the University believes broad implications will flow for Christians and all Canadians.

The case has been ongoing since 1996. In January 1999, the BCCT appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada, after losing two lower court rulings, for the right to deny approval to the certification year of TWU's teacher education program on the sole basis of disagreement with the University's religious beliefs. It has stated that current students who sign a Community Standards document requiring them, among other things, to refrain from extramarital sex including premarital sex, adultery and homosexual behaviour, might be intolerant of gay students in the public classroom.

### Dangerous implications

Trinity Western's factum outlines the errors made by the BCCT in its decision, and the dangerous implications of those errors for all Canadians. The following are main points and excerpts from TWU's factum:



COURTESY TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY

*Dr. Harro Van Brummelen, Dean of Undergraduate Studies at TWU.*

**A. The BCCT decided issues outside of its statutory mandate**

"...The BCCT was not created to render judgment on the acceptability of religious beliefs. Neither was it created to enforce human rights legislation in an attempt to eradicate perceived discrimination or unilaterally undertake the protection of minorities....The 'public interest' [referred to in the Act that established the BCCT, the professional teachers regulatory body] relates to establishing standards for the purpose of ensuring teachers are properly trained, competent and of good character.

**B. The BCCT did not properly consider Charter and Human Rights values**

"...If, in the alternative, the BCCT was correct in undertaking a review of the Charter and human rights values, it did so incorrectly by failing to recognize all such values which include the freedom of religion, expression and association... The process of considering and balancing competing Charter rights and human rights is difficult and complex. The BCCT failed to undertake this process. It purported to see what it thought were 'discriminatory practices' and denied TWU's application without any appropriate analysis."

**C. The BCCT did not recognize the Legislature has affirmed the value of TWU**

"...The B.C. Legislature mandates TWU to provide education and grant baccalaureate and graduate degrees with a Christian philosophy and viewpoint and therefore preserves and validates TWU's place in the educational community as being in the public interest. Obviously, the Legislature....does not view TWU as contrary to fundamental Canadian values."

**D. The BCCT's decision is discriminatory because it is based solely on a perception of TWU graduates**

"...if the concern was simply that such 'belief systems' *may* be perceived as not upholding Canadian societal values... it was inappropriate and offensive for the BCCT to deny TWU's application on that basis.... Decisions based upon possible perceptions are an anathema to our law and society... Stereotypes are prejudices based on perceptions of individuals belonging to a group and violate human dignity.

"It would quite clearly be improper for the BCCT to question individual applicants for membership as to their religious and/or moral views on homosexual behaviour. It is, therefore, also improper for the BCCT to deny TWU a teacher education program based on disapproval of the religious beliefs underlying the Community Standards."

**E. The BCCT has no evidence to support its decision**

"The BCCT fails to recognize the critical point that, despite the careful studies of TWU's proposed program [by two BCCT evaluation teams], it had no evidence before it capable of supporting its decision. The BCCT can only cite rhetorical questions concerning TWU graduates... Suspicions, questions, assumptions and perceptions are not evidence and decisions based on them should be anathema to both an administrative tribunal and a reviewing Court."

Following the submission of TWU's factum, the eight approved intervenor parties needed to complete their factums and submit them by June 19. Within a month or two following these last submissions, it is expected that the Supreme Court will announce a hearing date for oral arguments in Ottawa. The hearing date may happen in late fall or early 2001.

Trinity Western University, located in Langley, B.C., is a privately-funded Christian liberal arts university enrolling 2,763 students this year. With a broad-based, liberal arts and sciences curriculum, the university offers undergraduate degrees in 34 major areas ranging from business, education and computer science to biology and nursing, and 12 graduate degrees including theology, and administrative leadership.

# Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative receives award

**CC Staff (from a Christian Reformed Church in North America press release)**

BURLINGTON, Ont. — The Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative has been awarded the International Co-operation Award for Influencing Public Policy for the year 2000. The award was presented by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) and is sponsored by the International Development Research Centre.

The award citation reads:

"In Canada, Jubilee 2000, a campaign to cancel the external debts of the poorest countries, was officially launched in September of 1998. Led by the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative (CEJI) in the context of the global Jubilee campaign, it had two objectives: for action at the grassroots, the objective of raising 400,000-500,000 signatures on the debt cancellation petition, and at the public policy level, the objective to have Canada take a leadership role among creditor countries, particularly with the G-7 grouping of countries. By June, 1999, 635,000 Canadians had signed the debt petition."

### Debts of highly indebted poor countries cancelled

"There were also a number of developments on the public policy front. In March, 1999, the Prime Minister announced that Canada would cancel all bilateral debts owed by a selected group of Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) once they had successfully completed the HIPC Initiative process. Since then, the United States, France and Britain have declared 100 per cent bilateral debt cancellation for an even larger group of HIPCs. Extensive media coverage, international co-ordination, development education, timely action and global networking between churches, faith groups, and national justice groups are factors that led to the level of success of Jubilee 2000.

"The Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative is a project of over 30 churches and ecumenical coalitions. Inspired by the theology of Jubilee, the Initiative integrates concerns for social justice, peace and ecological integrity."

# Alpha Course for pre-Christians now available on website

LONDON, England (*The Internet for Christians Newsletter*) — The Alpha Course, developed at Holy Trinity Brompton, an Anglican church in central London (UK), is teaching pre-Christians and Christians worldwide the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

Currently more than 10,000 Alpha courses (a 15-session introduction to the Christian faith) are in progress in 77 countries and include many denominations (Baptist, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Methodist, Anglican/Episcopalian and more). Participants study "Questions of Life," sometimes accompanied by a light meal, followed by open discussion; weekend retreats are optional.

To find out about Youth Alpha, Student Alpha, Prison Alpha and Alpha conferences; access resource materials, a listing of countries with Alpha courses and to learn how to start an Alpha course in your area, interested readers can visit the main Alpha Web site at: **http://www.alpha.org.uk/**

Alpha Canada now has its own website, located at: **www.alphacanada.org/alphacan.html**

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Editorial

# The Adamic moment

**Harry der Nederlanden**

As Adam watched the animals go by two by two, some doubtlessly nuzzling one another, some perhaps even with young (who knows how long it took him to name them all? I bet those first bunnies didn't wait till he was finished before they started carrying out their mandate), he recognized his own incompleteness. He alone among all the creatures of the new earth was alone. Perhaps he wondered whether this was some oversight on God's part. How could God be so unaware as to declare, "Very, very good!" when his crowning masterpiece – the creature made to condense the glory of it all and return it to him as praise – is feeling like a wallflower at the graduation dance?

I imagine Adam hesitating and going through some soul-searching before confronting God with his loneliness. It must have seemed to him like challenging God's perfect wisdom. Eventually, though, all that courting and mating, all that snuggling and procreating going on around him must have made it clear to him that "very good" did not mean perfect in the sense of "finished." He could see with his own eyes that things were far from finished: everything was still beginning, springing forth, straining toward greater abundance and variety.

To counter the long tradition that celebrates Adam, the male, as first and as the epitome of the human, today's theologians stress that we were created as male and female. Yet, that overlooks this remarkable moment in the creation story. Unlike the other creatures, Adam stands alone: he is made to *recognize* and *confess* his incompleteness.

Literary theorists speak of our longing for an Adamic language, that is, for a language that corresponds perfectly to what it names. Adam seems to be able to do this for the animals. When he comes to naming himself, however, he falters. He sees that he's not all there.

God is still busy as Creator at this point. But before putting on the finishing touches. he apparently wants Adam's input. The other creatures get their mates without having to fill in an application form. Not Adam. He is made to compare himself with all those other creatures, and he observes, "Hey, what they're up to looks pretty good! I want to be part of a twosome like them." God, as it were, holds off completion until Adam asks for it — until Adam asks for a mate.

## Why this solitariness?

If Adam were a bit bashful, like me, he may have resented having to come hat in hand to ask what everyone else had received without asking. Had God overlooked him? Didn't he care that Adam was lonely? Or was there something wrong with Adam himself that he felt this way? After all, God periodically dropped in on him to stroll with him among the trees of the garden and to talk with him as with a friend....

But, no, perfect as he was, Adam couldn't have entertained such thoughts, could he?

Still, why this solitariness? Was it because God wanted to humble him a little, to make him see his likeness to those tumbling rabbits and rutting deer?

Or was it to make Adam *a participant in his own making*? This is surely what happens: when we reflect on the powerful, central role that sexuality, family, children, society and politics play in our make-up, we cannot begin to fathom being human without males and females. This essential thing, this doubleness that defines us, is something Adam asked for. It wasn't a prepackaged deal forced on him.

Gender, sexuality, family – these are often taken as the very beginning, the source of all human desire and motivation. There is, however, in this story a desire that precedes this – a desire for a desire like all the other creatures. It is a desire that Adam is left free to discover.

Before this, Adam walks in Godly likeness, his fellowship defined by a vertical relationship. To check his identity he looks up, and only up. When Adam comes to a fuller self-awareness, however, and he looks around, from side to side. From outside and from inside there arises a strong longing for another kind of likeness, a horizontal likeness.

## Coming out of his cocoon

And it's as if God sighs and says, "Aha, at last he's starting to wake up to what he is (and isn't yet); at last he's coming out of his cocoon." Part of our core identity, it seems, is a recognition of our lack. Our individuality is not, as the term may suggest, an indivisibility, as though we are intended to be integral and self-sufficient. Quite the contrary. This Adamic moment makes a recognition of lack and of need part of our very creatureliness. We are from the beginning bodily, sexual and social creatures who need the other.

God affirmed that moment, and he engendered his image-bearers to be male and female that they might become co-creators with him; or if that is too strong: at least that they might become creative co-workers.

The Adamic moment underlines our calling to obey God creatively. We don't do that by mechanically carrying out orders – *Befehl ist Befehl.* The Bible doesn't tell us how to make love to our spouses. Only that we should. The Bible tells us to make music to the glory of God. But it doesn't supply us with a musical scale or instructions on how to make a drum. That part is entrusted to us, not because these things are unimportant but because God created us in his image, able to do a lot without an instruction book.

After the Reformation, believers became very circumspect about creativity in church matters. They restricted themselves almost entirely to the Psalms for their music, at least, for the text. The melodies had to come from elsewhere. David's gifts did not serve as a model and inspiration for composing more psalms and hymns; his creativity was allowed to suppress ours, for he was given a monopoly on congregational praise.

The New Testament, however, shows us believers obediently *and creatively* developing a variety of ministries – offices – to organize and guide the emerging church, gradually turning it into an ordered, variegated body that contains people from several ethnic backgrounds and cultures. Scripture does not show us a church that simply perpetuates the practices of the synagogue. It doesn't follow the church for a long period of its history, but long enough to show it growing and developing, quickly adapting to big changes as it spreads beyond the boundaries of Israel. The church is not poured into some eternal, ahistorical mold.

## Leadership a gift of the Spirit

By so showing this development, also in the letters of Paul, Scripture seems to approve of this adaptation and development. The emergence of different kinds of leadership is described as a gift of the Spirit. And it has continued through the ages.

Look at the rich variety in the single office we call *pastor*: pastors work in hospitals, prisons, universities and nursing homes; they work in publications, radio and television; some specialize in psychology and others in administration; they work with sailors, pilots and soldiers. This only hints at the huge variety of work they do. We've stretched and adapted this office in ways the Reformers cannot have imagined.

Or perhaps they did, for, after leaving the church of Rome, they found themselves creating entirely new structures. Sure, they went back to the New Testament, but they hardly found there a blueprint for the order that eventually emerged.

The church obeys its scriptural calling by being creative, by adapting its ministries to new situations. Even in those churches that do not countenance women in office, many creative organizational things are done to make use of a wide range of women's – and men's – gifts outside of ordination. New functions are poured, and sometimes perhaps forced, into old molds. Perhaps both parties, from opposite sides, get too hung up on the entire matter of office and ordination. On the other hand, this is typical of the Reformed concern for good order.

The point of the offices is the equipping, inspiring and mobilizing of the saints for their service in the world and in the Kingdom of God. We must respect any system that is successful in doing that. I personally believe that this is best achieved by opening the offices to women, and I believe that the Bible, from beginning to end, pushes the people of God in that direction. It does not, however, command it: we are left to discern and develop some things on our own. It is part of our anticipation of the new order that will prevail in the New Earth.

However, if it is part of our freedom, to force the practice on others seems contrary to the spirit of the church. Yet, the day will surely come, and it isn't far away, when women will be welcomed into all of the offices of the church. A great deal, however, hinges on how patiently and graciously we handle the transition, and I respect the way the synod of the CRC has dealt with the matter. It has shown itself to be an obedient, listening servant.

**Christian Courier**

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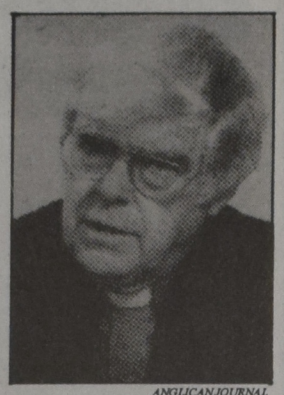
# Pastoral letter from Anglican Archbishop highlights problems

*The following letter was read to all Anglican congregations in Canada May 28, 2000. We include it in CC as a way of being 'with' this church in very difficult times.*

**Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:**

I write to share something of this moment in the life of the Anglican Church of Canada. In this troubling time we are faced with litigation so costly as to change radically our structures and our life as a national church. But the time is also profoundly hopeful; God leads us ever deeper into the path of healing and new life.

Simply put: resulting from abuse in the residential schools, there are over 1,600 claims of varying kinds brought against the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. About one hundred cases involve the proven abuse of children, and the perpetrators are in prison. The costs of litigation and settlements for these alone is sufficient to exhaust all the assets of the General Synod and of some dioceses involved.



ANGLICAN JOURNAL

*Archbishop Michael Peers*

**Seeking alternatives to litigation**

What does this mean? For the national church, the way we presently carry out our mission will be modified. We are negotiating with the federal government in order to find alternatives to litigation by which we can make a just contribution to compensation. We will know in a few months if an agreement is possible. However, whether or not this is achievable, we will be a very different Church.

Where in this do I discern hope? At the heart of it, we trust God is with us in the choices we face, that we will find new ways to carry out our shared mission and that we will continue to work for healing and reconciliation.

Healing and reconciliation is our first and clearly affirmed goal. Both the Council of General Synod and the House of Bishops gave it the strongest possible support in meetings earlier this month. The legacy of the schools has been deeply wounding. Healing never happens if we ignore the wounds. The first step is truth-telling — recognizing and acknowledging past failures. The Anglican Church of Canada collaborated with the Government of Canada in a policy that brought pain to many individuals and despair in many communities. That injury continues into the present. We have an obligation, and a will born of our desire to be just, to account for past injustice.

Healing also requires being prepared to turn and walk in a different direction. Indeed repentance means "turning around." The wounds of past prejudices, injustices and broken trust will never be healed unless we "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being." Ever since the General Synod of 1969 set us in a new direction, aboriginal and non-aboriginal Anglicans have been learning to walk together in a different way. I assure aboriginal brothers and sisters that we will not be deflected from this road. I call each of us to recommit ourselves to that path, so that together we may find the healing Christ offers in his Cross and Resurrection.

I want to assure all Anglicans that what is at risk financially are our assets, not the contributions that provide for the ongoing ministry and mission of the church at parish, diocesan or national levels. Your contributions serve the mission of the church — not the costs of litigation. If our present structures cease to exist, we will find a way for our contributions to continue to serve that work.

How do we continue authentically if the depletion of our assets means we are unable to meet the claims against us? I believe that our greatest asset in the Anglican Church of Canada is our ability to be in relationship, to support and care for each other. This will survive. So will our capacity to worship, to learn, to grow, to serve and to bear witness to Christ. Nothing at the heart of our faith — our desire for wholeness and healing in ourselves, in our relationships, in our country and in our world — is at risk. We have these abundant and enduring assets that will help us continue to do justice and work for healing.

**Pray for church leaders**

As we move into the future, I ask for your prayers: for the bishops and people of Cariboo and Qu'Appelle dioceses who are most immediately concerned; for members of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples who give outstanding leadership, and who bear such love for the whole of the Church; for those whose ministries are given over to witness in the courts. Pray that we may all perceive the need for our own healing.

We read in the gospels how Jesus speaks of things ending — of the heavens and earth in turmoil. In one sense, it is a picture of chaos. But Jesus says that it is more truly to be interpreted as a birth: "...when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." (Luke 21:28) For many in the church, things are being shaken, and it feels like chaos. But we stand up and raise our heads; God is present and leads us into something new.

When we look up at the evening horizon, we see the sun falling. Turn the other way, and we will see it rise. I believe with all my heart, and with sure confidence, that God is with us both in the falling and in the rising, and that, even in our dying, God will bring us to new life.

**ArchbishopMichael Peers**
**Anglican Church of Canada**

## *Where we started the journey*

After reading your editorial "Take a break: God did"(May 29), I was reminded of the song *Come Away* by Don Fransisco:

*Come away, come away into quiet and trust, come away.*
*Come away, come away in repentance and rest, come away,*
*For the heavens are telling the glory of God;*
*The works of his hands teach his ways;*
*The night reveals knowledge, we must understand*
*His invisible nature is explained through the day.*

It goes on to talk about the rat race, the illusions we call life-giving.

I also take to the woods in the summer – mostly to get away from the routine and busyness of life, the phone, the bills.

God created man and set him down in a garden of beauty, harmony and peace. It`s where man started the journey. Small wonder we long to go back home to that place where man once lived in harmony, trust and peace with the Creator.

Excellent editorial – rest.

**Irene vander Spruit**
**Stirling, Ont.**

# The Dove: an essay on presence

**(For Rem Kooistra)**

Breast feathers pure
as grace;
wings spread
less for flight
than gathering benediction;
dark eyes deep, knowing
with mild acceptance;
blunt beak silent;
only the inner breast
burbling comfort
like water springs –
the dove descends through time,
a miracle of white on blue,
making time stand, still
stand to impale the heart.

But this one?
This one crashes down
like a load of ragged laundry
flung from upper storeys,
a storm of feathers,
a scrum, a scramble,
not a flock. Scratching,
strutting, pecking, contaminating
the sidewalk, competing
with sparrows, grackles, gulls,
mortifying his sacred ancestors
with his unruly entrances.
Dove —
the name diffuses in the air
in dust-motes, feather-bits,
fragments of bird dung.
In naming, which do we invoke?
The widower clucks,
tossing bits of bread.
I duck the beat of battling wings,
missing
no doubt the holy things.

**Harry der Nederlanden**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# Environmental conflict and the church

Creation waits...
**John Wood**

One of the most remarkable insights of the 20th century is that the earth is one. We know, in ways our predecessors could not, that we live in a single global system or biosphere. A corollary to this insight is that we also function, for good or ill, in an increasingly global economy. Over the past 30 years the environment has been institutionalized in every sector of society – especially the economy. And this process has increasingly involved us in environmental conflict.

### The church responds to conflict

Conflict, in any society is inevitable. The challenge is how we react. The institution of the church is an important agent for shaping attitudes and institutions of social stability but also of change. The church has spoken often and effectively to a variety of controversial social issues. Racism, apartheid, peace and war, abortion, and divorce and remarriage are only a few of the controversial issues religious leaders have addressed. There is no single voice of "The Church"; yet, the social capital of vital religious life is clear.

The voice of the church, as historians and theologians have shown, is particularly muted on environmental concerns. The reasons for this are complex. But the result has been that, with a few notable exceptions, there is little involvement by Christians, as Christians, in environmental conflict resolution.

### Conflict is everywhere

Environmental conflict has an exceedingly broad scope. It ranges from one-on-one interpersonal disputes to regional, national and even international aggression. It involves different understandings, values, interests, living contexts and worldviews. And it touches on nearly every aspect of our lives. But the umbrella of the environment is so encompassing that it has been difficult to conceive of a comprehensive approach to conflict resolution. Here is where the Scriptures offer us great insight.

The process of conflict resolution has been institutionalized in various secular structures. Increasingly we have come to rely on this specialized knowledge to solve problems. But this secularization of conflict resolution largely misses the essential element of Christian worldview and faith-based ethical motivation. What we are coming to understand is that this absence is more due to its omission by Christians than by deliberate exclusion. A survey of Christian environmental ethics texts, for instance, shows that few have specifically discussed conflict, violence or its resolution. There is opportunity to speak, but we seem to lack a sufficiently robust understanding of the stewardship ethic with which to do so.

### Building a new community

Lionel Basney and Wendell Berry, among others, have been eloquent in their call for renewed community in an environmental context. However, caution is needed in how we enter these debates. There is not even agreement in the church, or among secular groups, that Christians should be involved in these discussions. A renewed understanding of the doctrine of creation and the practice of stewardship can challenge older ways of looking at the world. The definition of stewardship can be expanded in ways that will be helpful in mediating environmental conflict. The messages of forgiveness, restoration and hope need to be recast with environmental examples. We need to learn to exegete our culture to find new ways to resolve the conflicts of the day.

Susan Bratton notes that "home congregations rarely acknowledge environmentally conscious Christians for their ministries to their neighbors and to creation." She says that we should consider formally commissioning those willing to serve by ordaining environmental deacons in our churches. The Canadian environmental group A Rocha has done something like this recently by raising funds to send missionary earthkeepers to Lebanon.

It will take more than a few new terms to solve the problems of environmental conflict. But the first step is for Christians to recognize that we are called to be peacemakers in all of the diverse situations of life. It is time for us to take a more deliberate approach to this new class of conflicts. It is time to seek the Lord of all creation.

*John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College in Edmonton.*

# Can we learn from Walkerton?

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*It is not enough to trail this tragedy back to specific cattle shedding E coli or to a contaminated septic system or to an overflowing sewage treatment plant. Is agriculture doing all it can?*

**Elbert van Donkersgoed**

It will take months, in all likelihood years, before we make some sense out of our tragedy in Walkerton. Perhaps never. But learning our lessons starts today.

When children and seniors die as a result of failures in the system we will do much more than look for causes, glitches and oversights. How we live in the countryside has been changed — irrevocably, forever.

Rural Ontario can never be the same. As inquiries sift through every tragic detail: every decision, every test – or missing test, every technological fix – or missed opportunity; we will find ourselves reviewing the choices we have made for living rural, for using the gift of good land, for tending God's creation.

### The right first step

The planned independent public inquiry into the tragedy at Walkerton is the right first step to learning our lessons. It is only a beginning. The bigger task: identify what needs to be done to restore public trust that in Ontario this will never happen again.

It is not enough to trail this tragedy back to specific cattle shedding E coli or to a contaminated septic system or to an overflowing sewage treatment plant. Livestock agriculture is a known source of E coli. Is agriculture doing all it can?

The inquiry must be given a broad mandate. It must ask:

a) What farm management initiatives will reduce the risk of environmental contamination by E coli?

b) Do large-scale farm enterprises pose higher risks for shedding E coli into the environment?

c) Is the level of risk of water contamination increasing as agriculture intensifies?

d) Does the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs serve the public interest when it promotes the intensification of farming?

e) Does the Normal Farm Practices Protection Board provide an appropriate balance between the opportunities for farmers to expand and adopt new technology and the public's concern for the quality of life in the countryside?

f) Are farmers adequately trained in managing the quality of our water?

g) Are those involved in water management adequately trained?

h) Is this tragedy a failure to manage according to the rules? Or do existing laws and regulations have weaknesses?

When children and seniors fall victim to failures in the system, it is not enough to pinpoint — and then fix — those breakdowns. Each of us: families, businesses, organizations and municipalities will review how we live on the land and steward the countryside. God's good creation has spoken. God has given us a vibrant, flexible, even forgiving environment, but there *are* limits.

Remember Walkerton. Tread lightly.

*Elbert van Donkersgoed is the Strategic Policy Advisor of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario.*

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## Sun and Babies

(NC)—If you've got a new "beach baby" this summer, keep her in the shade, and remember these hot tips:

- Don't use sunscreens on babies under six months old.
- For babies under a year old, a sunburn should be considered an emergency: Call your family doctor.

For more tips on protecting you and your family from the summer sun, surf to the Sympatico Web site at www.sympatico.ca

*- News Canada*

Arts/Media

# *Tutu's book illustrates vividly South Africa's transformation*

**Reviewed by Rev. John de Vries, Jr.**

## No Future Without Forgiveness

**by Desmond Tutu**

*Doubleday, N.Y., 1999*

*ISBN: 0385496893, Hardcover: 287 pp., $23.95 (U.S.)*

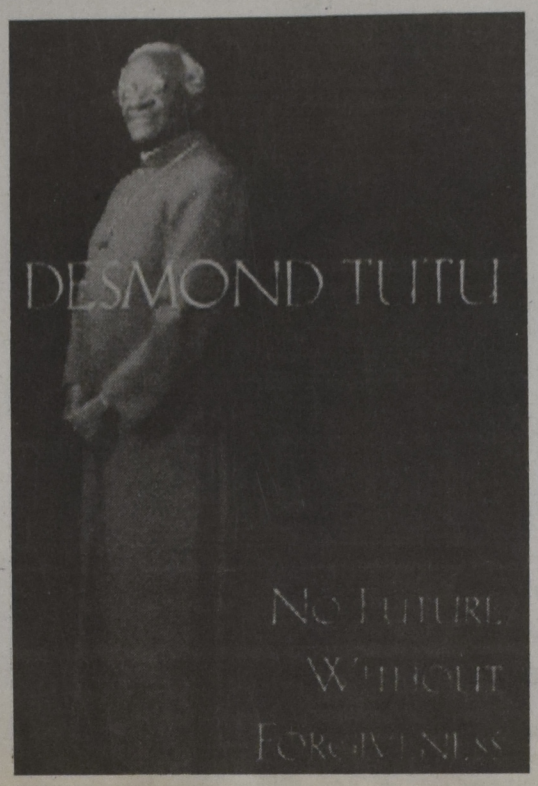
Archbishop Tutu's first-hand account of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is a compassionate and moving expression of South Africa's suffering, pain and healing. Appointed by President Nelson Mandela to be the chairman of the TRC in 1995, Desmond Tutu's account of the experience, described in *No Future Without Forgiveness*, illustrates vividly and candidly South Africa's transformation from apartheid's despotism to democracy's freedom.

### Compassion, objectivity

As the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner and the Archbishop of Cape Town, the author is well equipped to write about this portion of South Africa's story. With a unique combination of compassion and objectivity he describes the terrible atrocities uncovered as 20,000 people stepped forward to tell their stories of terror and violence. Rather than prosecute past wrongs or forget the darkness of the past, a third avenue of truth-telling and amnesty was chosen by President Mandela.

The sixteen member TRC facilitated beginnings of healing in a wounded nation. Tutu was the TRC chairman and its guiding visionary. This book is Tutu's story as much as it is the story of South Africa and the TRC. To address the issues and describe the events Archbishop Tutu is empowered by a living theology and a spiritual dynamic that fosters respect and co-operation with other persons regardless of race, religion, or past behavior.

Reconciliation and forgiveness are not normally part of the political agenda. The author opines that President Nelson Mandela "must have believed that our work would be profoundly spiritual." In addition to four ordained clergy on the TRC there was "a Muslim, a Hindu, some lapsed believers and an agnostic or two." All TRC sessions opened and closed with prayer. The need for healing




transcended the diversities of faiths and "pigmentocracy." Such was the energy that nurtured modernity's greatest experience of healing, reconciliation and "restorative justice."

### Friendly and picturesque

The author's style is friendly and picturesque. The commission at the beginning "leaked like a sieve." He writes about the good and the bad. He refuses to sensationalise or emotionalise the inhumane. Leadership of the TRC was an awesome task. The Archbishop openly acknowledges that mistakes were made. His physical stamina and deep seated spirituality carried him through the ups and downs of the four-year TRC history. The author's efforts to understand the perpetrators of the apartheid atrocities evidences charity of spirit. His timely and ironic historical references provide a penetrating historical overview of a country in transition. Former President F.W. De Klerk is praised for the courage of his decision on February 2, 1990 to promise open elections and avoid a national blood bath.

The Archbishop, with a pastoral and prophetic heart, laments De Klerk's failure to apologize for the evils of apartheid. This failure, it is suggested, forfeited De Klerk from going "down in history as a truly great South African statesman."

For many readers justice may mean punishment, retribution and the settling of accounts. For President Mandela and the TRC, justice was to be realized in healing and reparation. The forgotten roots of Judao-Christian restorative justice were complemented by the native African concept of "ubuntu." Ubuntu teaches that "my humanity is inextricably bound up in yours.... A person is a person through other persons. I am human because I belong, I participate, I share." Only those who participated in truth-telling were granted amnesty and found personal healing and freedom without vengeance.

The author's charming sense of humor surfaces when he questions why God would have created mankind so bent on doing evil. Regardless, says Tutu, God "believes in us, and depends on us to make the world all he wants it to be." Such a comprehensive and empowering theological rationale helped birth a new South Africa.

### Spiced with anecdotes

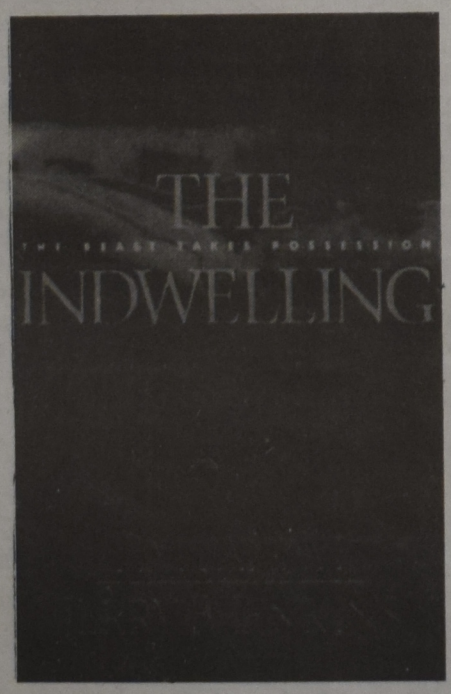
The book is spiced with delightful anecdotes: there are the references to Winnie Mandela's football club; a man's discovery of his molested brothers because "I bought those shoes"; and his account his speaking engagement at formerly pro-apartheid churches; Tutu's description of the commission beginning, "I was not too smart." The author has an international readership in view and specifically helps Westerners understand the struggles of the TRC when he mentions that the TRC like the O.J. Simpson trial was sometimes split along racial lines,

The telling of the TRC story provides a living model for "restorative justice" among the community of nations. After the TRC report was handed over to President Mandela on October 29, 1998, the author describes his visits to other world trouble spots — Ireland, Israel, and Rwanda. While it may have been difficult for his respective hosts to accept his understanding of "reconciliation and truth," South Africa's experience was the model where non-retributive justice healed a broken people. Spiritually rooted and faith-driven reconciliation and justice happened in South Africa because, according to the author, God intended it to work there as well as elsewhere in the world.

This is a powerful account about an unprecedented national experience of restorative justice and healing through truth- telling followed by amnesty. *No Future Without Forgiveness* is a book for every person who is open to be a partner in realizing God's intent that the world be a better place.

*Rev. John de Vries, Jr. is a ministry co-ordinator of chaplaincy services, who lives in London, Ont.*

# Christian end-of-the-world novel hits bestseller list




(Religion Today) — The latest Christian thriller is No. 1 on a secular best-seller list. *The Indwelling* (Tyndale House), the seventh installment in the end-of-the-world saga by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, had presales of 1.4 million copies, ranking No. 2 on the Amazon.com best-seller list before it was in the bookstores.

The book jumped to first place when it arrived in bookstores May 30, as some stores in the South and West opened at midnight to long lines of fans, *The Chicago Tribune* said. Two titles in the *Left Behind* series were million-sellers in hardcover and two others were million-sellers in paperback last year, *Publishers Weekly* said. A movie based on the first book in the series, *Left Behind*, will finish filming June 4 and is scheduled for a February release, the *Tribune* said.

# *CBC to air series on restorative justice*

OTTAWA — CBC Radio will air a five-part series on restorative justice entitled *To Hurt or to Heal: the Contest over Crime and Punishment* on its Ideas program June 26 - 30. The series is drawn to our attention by Rick Prashaw of The Church Council on Justice and Corrections of which the CRC is also a member.

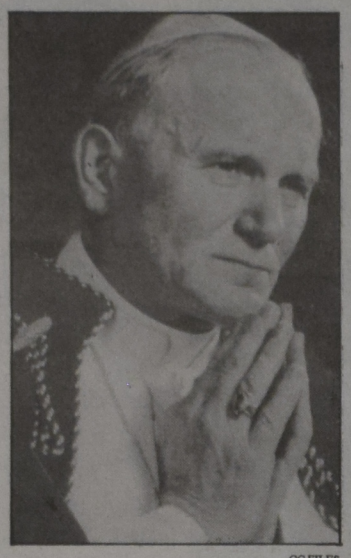
The program takes a close look at the concept of restorative justice, which seeks to do more than just punish offenders, but to achieve some measure of reconciliation and restoration. The idea has been hailed by the Supreme Court of Canada and been endorsed by both the RCMP and the Correctional Service. Yet many Canadians and politicians complain that our criminal justice system is already too lenient and they call for more severe sentences. Is restorative justice a matter of leniency? David Cayley, the producer, will talk to policy makers, judges, correctional officers, offenders and victims about whether it can be made to work in contemporary society and our overburdened criminal justice system.

Church

# Pope addresses journalists on World Communications Day

ROME (Vatican) — Some 7,000 journalists from all around the world were addressed first by Vatican officials on June 3 and then by Pope John Paul himself on June 4 as part of the Jubilee of Journalists celebrated at Rome to mark World Communications Day.

On June 3, Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, presiding at an ecumenical celebration of the Word for participants in the Jubilee of Journalists, acknowledged that one task of journalists is to "show the public the divisions and violence that exist between members of a family, of rival groups and of nations," but he added that their work must also contribute to reconciliation. He concluded: "Make of this Jubilee 2000 a moment of reconciliation, becoming once again instruments of reconciliation in your work and in your homes! Be a true gift for the society in which you live and for the world!"



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*Pope John Paul II*

## Coinciding with Ascension Day

Pope John Paul reminded the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square that World Communications Day coincided with Ascension Day, which concluded the public life of Jesus and marked the missionary expansion of the Church, when "Christ's disciples began to spread everywhere the word of salvation."

"This is the mission of every baptized person," he continued. "And today's celebration of World Communications Day makes direct reference to that mission with its theme: 'Announcing Christ in the Means of Communication at the Dawn of the New Millennium.' ... Precisely to underline the importance of the media, which represents a pastoral priority for the Church, it was decided to celebrate on this occasion the Jubilee of Journalists."

He observed that "journalists and professionals in social communications and everyone who, in any way, works in this sector, are asked to discharge their mission in a responsible way, aware that when one works while respecting the truth, one renders a precious service to the truth itself, and thus to mankind."

John Paul expressed his gratitude towards the many journalists who, throughout his pontificate, "have striven to make the words and acts of my ministry known. I am deeply grateful for all this commitment, for the objectivity and courtesy that have marked a large part of this service, and I ask the Lord to give each their adequate reward."

## Ethics part of journalism

He reminded his audience that the question of ethics cannot be separated from journalistic work. "With its immense and direct influence on public opinion, journalism cannot only be guided by economic forces, by profits and partisan interests." He recalled that "the powerful communications media" are entrusted to journalists "for the good of all and especially for the good of the weakest groups, from children to the poor, from the sick to people who are marginalized and discriminated against."

"One cannot write or broadcast," he continued, "solely on the basis of audience ratings and to the detriment of a truly informative service. Nor can one appeal indiscriminately to the right to know, without taking into account the other rights of the person. No freedom, including freedom of expression, is absolute; indeed, its limits lie in the duty to respect the dignity and legitimate freedom of others. Nothing, however fascinating it may be, can be written, produced or transmitted if it damages truth, I am thinking here not just of the truth of the events you report but also of the 'truth of man', of the dignity of the human person in all its dimensions."

## Reminder to church

The Pontifical Council for Social Communications recently published a rich and substantial statement on Ethics in Communication which makes good reading for all Christians. It begins by reminding the church that its approach to the media ought to be "fundamentally positive, encouraging. She does not simply stand in judgment and condemn; rather, she considers these instruments to be not only products of human genius but also great gifts of God and true signs of the times."

What the church has to offer to those in communications, the paper suggests, is "a long tradition of moral wisdom, rooted in divine revelation and human reflection (cf. Pope John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 36-48). Part of this is a substantial and growing body of social teaching, whose theological orientation is an important corrective to 'the 'atheistic' solution, which deprives man of one of his basic dimensions, namely the spiritual one, and to permissive and consumerist solutions, which under various pretexts seek to convince man that he is free from every law and from God himself' (Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 55). More than simply passing judgment, this tradition offers itself in service to the media. For example, 'the Church's culture of wisdom can save the media culture of information from becoming a meaningless accumulation of facts' (Pope John Paul II, Message for the 33rd World Communications Day, 1999)."

The paper goes on to describe the economic, political, cultural, educational, and religious ways in which the media can be used to build and sustain human community. It stresses that "media are called to serve human dignity by helping people live well and function as persons in community. Media do this by encouraging men and women to be conscious of their dignity, enter into the thoughts and feelings of others, cultivate a sense of mutual responsibility, and grow in personal freedom, in respect for others' freedom, and in the capacity for dialogue."

# *Anglican primate equates Buddha, Mohammed with Christ*

SYDNEY, Australia (EP) - Buddha and Mohammed offer salvation equal to Christ, the newly inaugurated head of the Anglican Church of Australia wrote in an article published for Easter. Archbishop Peter Carnley was installed as primate of the Anglican Church on April 30 at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney, despite protests that his views were at odds with church doctrine. "In the context of the tragic brokenness of the present world, we also have responsibilities to foster dialogue with other faiths," said Carnley on April 30. Carnley's installation was boycotted by two bishops. Petitions affirming traditional Christian teachings were circulated among churches as a show of protest. In a rally outside the Cathedral protesters waved posters with anti-Anglican and anti-Carnley slogans painted on them.


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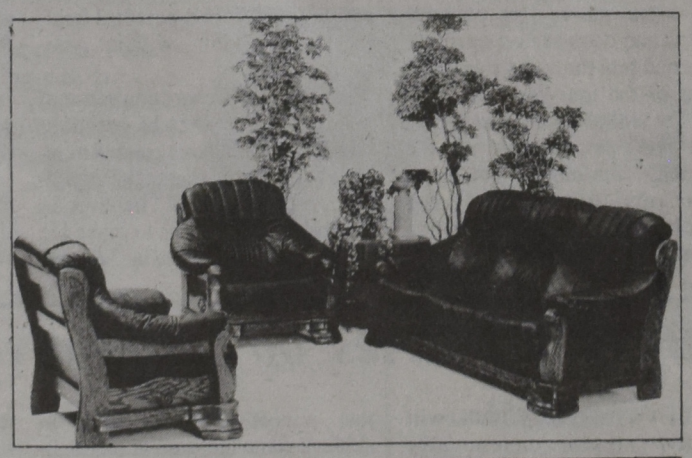

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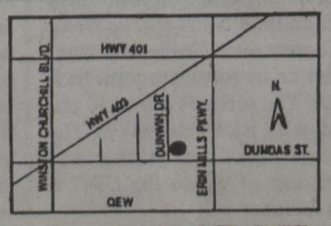


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Church

# Churches lead effort for democratic elections and civic education in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (EP) — Despite widespread fear and threats of violence, parliamentary elections did take place on May 21 in Haiti, one of the world's poorest nations. According to reports, churches played a vital role in bringing democratic elections to the Haitian people.

### Suspension of democracy

After more than 12 months suspension of democratic institutions, Haiti's Catholic and Protestant churches addressed a joint message to the nation on April 3, in which they reminded the authorities of their duty to organize elections as soon as possible.

This was the first time that Catholics and Protestants had publicly taken a joint stance in Haiti. For several years now both churches have been engaged in an effort of civic education to prepare the people for casting their vote, reports Nathalie Baud of the World Council of Churches (WCC).

The Haitian government provides scant public services to the people, requiring churches to pick up the slack in several areas, such as providing food and health care to Haiti's poor.

The Haitian Protestant Federation (HPF), a coalition of the country's Protestant churches, including Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians and evangelicals, used radio to encourage Christians to exercise their civic rights.

For a number of years, "Radio Lumière," an evangelical radio station funded by HPF, has produced a daily civic education program in Creole, encouraging listeners to believe that the people of Haiti could influence their country's destiny, and that Christians should get involved in politics.

### Illiteracy an obstacle

Perhaps the most daunting factor impediment to civic education and participation was Haiti's 55 percent illiteracy rate. To overcome this problem, HPF trained more than 500 young leaders who taught civic education in all the parishes in the country. They encouraged voters to elect candidates who have already done something useful in political and public life and to inquire into the honesty of the candidates standing for election.

The Haitian churches also were very active in monitoring the parliamentary elections. Two hundred international observers traveled to Port-au-Prince to participate. Also, for the first time, Haitians decided to set up a citizens' observer mission. With 30,000 national observers, 1,000 of them directly recruited by the churches, this is the first election in Haiti to be held under close supervision by the people themselves.

### Christians played leading role

According to Edouard Paultre, the general secretary of HPF, Christians played a leading role in mobilizing Haitian civil society for free and fair elections. He estimated that 40 percent of the Haitian observers were committed Christians.

It has been several days since the polls closed, but the work of the observers is not finished. Numerous irregularities have been noted and the observers, Christian and non-Christian, now have to record these in their reports.

Failure to respect the secrecy of the ballot, inadequately trained staff in the polling stations, attempts to influence voters, intimidation of observers, and ballot boxes left unattended after the polls closed were some of the problems reported by observers. Even optimists like Paultre expected problems of this kind; these elections are likely to be strongly protested by losing parties.

# *Putting the paddle down*

**Chapter & Verse**
**Mary Hulst Antonides**

*"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed."* Mark 1:35 (NIV)

*"At daybreak Jesus went out to a solitary place."* Luke 4:42a (NIV)

I went canoeing last weekend. I was away for a few days with my family on our third annual camping expedition and we stayed at a state park in Indiana. This state park has a wonderful lake and on one beautiful summer evening my sister-in-law and I rented a canoe and set forth.

With the setting sun glinting off the smooth surface of the lake, we paddled our way from one side of the lake to the other, taking advantage of the little coves that were too shallow and log-infested for anglers, but just right for us.

### Quiet encounters with nature

Several times along our way we just stopped, rested our paddles on our knees, and looked. We came within 10 feet of blue heron, bitterns, a pair of swans, bright scarlet tanagers, and wading raccoons. As long as we slid silently along the surface, they were undisturbed. When we picked up our paddles and splashed on, the birds either took flight or swam off another way.

My sister-in-law remarked that such encounters are one reason she enjoys canoeing so much. "It's so quiet," she said, "and you can get so close to things that would otherwise skitter away."

We canoed for an hour, watching the sun set, watching the wildlife search for morsels, watching the occasional angler troll by. It was a lovely evening.

### Canoeing in a spiritual sense

As I think back on that quiet loveliness, especially here at my desk surrounded by stacks of papers, a blinking light on my phone which signals a waiting message, and books which need to be read — I realize that I need to go canoeing more often. I need to do it in the literal sense: heading to a river, piling into a canoe and setting forth, but I also need to canoe in a spiritual sense. I need to have times in my life when I just stop, and put the paddle on my knees for a while, and take a good look around.

I am a good paddler. I can churn away for quite a time without stopping. But what insights, ideas, revelations, epiphanies skitter away from me because I am splashing too much to notice them? What have I missed in my experience of God because I simply splash on, rather than putting the paddle down and looking around me?

My sister-in-law was the one who encouraged me to stop for a while and take it all in. In my life, I need the same kind of encouragement. I need people who tell me to look up, look here, stop for a minute, let the paddle rest. I need to create spaces, even schedule them into my calendar, for putting the paddle down.

### Jesus' personal retreats

Jesus did this on a regular basis. So often the gospels record that he went off by himself to a quiet place. Jesus, who could have healed so many more people, preached so many more sermons, challenged so many more paradigms, went away by himself from time to time to pray, to recharge, to refresh and strengthen himself. If Jesus saw the need for that and made the time for it, how much more do we need that in our lives?

This summer, I am going to go canoeing again. And, from time to time, I am going to stop and put the paddle down. I don't want anything to skitter away.

*Rev. Mary S. Hulst Antonides is pastor of Eastern Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Mich.*

# *Evangelism not a hate crime say evangelical leaders*

CHICAGO, Ill. (EP) — Responding to accusations that gospel preaching contributes to hate crimes, some of America's most prominent Christian leaders have reasserted the constitutional right to evangelize.

A group of 84 scholars, theologians and church leaders endorsed a document called "The Chicago Declaration on Religious Freedom: Sharing Jesus Christ in a Pluralistic Society." Participants in the statement include Charles Colson of Prison Fellowship, theologians Carl F. H. Henry, J.I. Packer, and R.C. Sproul, Campus Crusade for Christ founder Bill Bright, David Neff of *Christianity Today*, Janet Parshall of the Family Research Council, Jay Sekulow of the American Center for Law and Justice and evangelist Franklin Graham.

CC FILES

*Charles Colson of Prison Fellowship*

### Fears of violence

The June 2 document is a response to charges made by an interfaith coalition in Chicago, which urged the Southern Baptist Convention to abandon plans for a major evangelistic thrust in the city this summer. The Council of Religious Leaders in Metropolitan Chicago expressed fear that a Southern Baptist plan to send 100,000 missionaries into Chicago would undo progress made toward interfaith dialogue. Members of the council said an evangelistic campaign could lead to violence against members of minority religions, such as Judaism, Hinduism and Islam.

The evangelical document rejects the accusation that evangelism undermines "a peaceful, pluralistic society and may lead to intolerance, bigotry, and even violence." Instead, they argued, only a society that permits free discourse "can safeguard the true liberty, freedom, and human dignity we all pursue."

The declaration admits "with shame" that some Christian churches have not respected the rights of others, and rejects evangelism by means of "coercive techniques, dishonest appeals, or any form of deception."

But the statement also declares, "Misguided or false notions of pluralism must not be allowed to jeopardize anyone's constitutional right to evangelize or promote one's faith."

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, told the *Dallas Morning News* that connecting evangelism and hate crimes is nonsense. "The declaration puts our critics on notice that they're going to have to defend what appears to a lot of Americans to be intolerance," he said.

News/Psychology

# *Dobson's choice: Christian morality vs. 'big tent' politics*

***[We include the following story, released by the Christian Heritage Party of Canada, for two reasons. It clearly states one influential view of what constitutes Christian political action. And it raises the question of whether Christian political involvement in Canada is beginning to resemble that of the U.S., a question which has been raised by different commentators in connection with the candidacy of Day for the leadership of the Alliance. We ask our readers: is this really the only choice before us?]***

CC FILES

*Dr. James Dobson*

OTTAWA — The Christian Heritage Party (CHP) of Canada has welcomed a startling development in the US presidential race.

CHP Leader Ron Gray, speaking from his home in Hull, Quebec, today applauded the stand taken by influential American evangelical leader Dr. James Dobson that "Moral principles are more important than winning elections short-term."

Dobson made the statement May 24 as he warned Republican candidate George W. Bush against adopting the so-called "big tent" political philosophy. That strategy says the 'GOP' should make room for both pro-life and pro-abortion, or pro-family and pro-homosexual policies, at the same time — in effect, refusing to take a stand on moral issues.

### 'Refusal to take a stand'

"That's the same stance that the Reform Party has always taken — a refusal to take a stand on moral issues — and it's also the position the new Alliance Party is taking," Gray said. "Here in Canada, as in the USA, it's exactly what Dr. Dobson called it: a betrayal of their core supporters."

Dobson, a best-selling author and internationally-known broadcaster, made his comments at a first-ever media symposium staged for national political reporters at the headquarters of Focus on the Family in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

It is Dobson's moral influence with evangelical Christians that makes him a political player and candidate-maker in US politics, according to an article in the Denver, Col., *Rocky Mountain News*, although he stressed that he has no political ambitions for himself or his ministry.

Dobson said Bush faces defeat in November if he buys into a "big tent" strategy by courting homosexual approval or choosing a running mate like abortion-rights supporters Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge or New Jersey Gov. Christine Todd Whitman. Such an appeal to what Dobson called "the mushy centre" could cause millions of evangelical Christians who stayed home during the 1998 election to do it again, he warned.

### Moral principles more important

Dobson did not rule out throwing his support to a third party — even if the outcome might be another Democratic president. Moral principles are more important than winning elections short-term, he insisted.

In previous statements, Dobson has said that during the 1996 presidential elections, he voted for Howard Phillips of the Constitution Party, because the fringe party and its leader were the only real pro-life option.

"It's encouraging to see a leader of Dr. Dobson's calibre demonstrate the importance of voting according to principle, instead of playing 'what-if' games," Gray said. "I've been telling Canadians for four years that 'strategic' voting — picking a party you think might have a chance of winning, instead of voting on principle — really undermines the democratic process. And it's also taking on a responsibility that belongs to God. He determines the overall outcome of the election — He rules in the affairs of nations.

"But each of us has stewardship over one vote, and I believe that one day we'll answer for how we used it," he concluded.

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

(NC)—Even if greenhouse gas emissions were to stop immediately, the effects of past emissions on climate would persist for centuries. For more information about Global Climate Change, please consult Environment Canada's Green Lane at www.ec.gc.ca.

# *Feelings are messages about ourselves*

**Getting Unstuck**
**Arlene Van Hove**

She grimaces with irritability when I ask her how she felt when her husband died a few months ago. She does not recognize the sadness and loneliness so vividly present in her shadowed eyes. She desperately wants to live a victorious Christian life and quotes Bible verses to support her need to be joyful in all circumstances. I admire her determination but mourn her fear of feeling the sorrow so deeply entrenched within her.

A young father looks confused in my parenting class when I gently suggest his anger towards his son is about himself. He elaborates for the second time how his son began stealing from the local store six months ago, suggesting he has a right to be angry. I acknowledge his anger and again suggest this is about himself.

A middle aged women looks quizzical in my self-esteem workshop when I ask her if she can own her feelings about her friends not supporting her in time of need. She shakes her head. Her emphasis had been on how her friends had wronged her, not on what she was feeling. The change of milieu startles her.

### Feelings are gifts from God

I use the popular self-help notion that we are responsible for our own feelings more liberally in my classes and workshops than in therapy because it is fraught with misunderstandings in seriously painful situations. However, if we can understand and practice this principle we will be able to live freer lives.

Feelings are given to us by God. They tell us what is going on within ourselves. They are neither good nor bad. They just are and they are ours. We need to respect our feelings and accept them as messages about ourselves in relationship to what is going on around us.

Most of us externalize our feelings, holding those who hurt us responsible. We emphasize what they did or did not do. We usually also have strong feelings about needing to confront to make sure it will not happen again. Inevitably, however, we will be hurt again.

On the other hand, some of us stuff our feelings inside ourselves to such an extent we become ill or chronically depressed. We blame ourselves over and over again and we see ourselves as worthless and beyond help.

The idea of being responsible for our feelings is well known but often misunderstood. It is not unusual for warring couples, siblings or friends to toss this concept around to deflect responsibility for hurting one another. Nor is it unusual to think taking responsibility for our feelings means blaming ourselves for having them.

On the contrary, taking responsibility for our feelings means acknowledging, respecting and processing them in ways that allows us to function effectively.

For instance, it is normal for the above woman to feel sorrow and grief at the loss of her husband. It is also normal for the father to be angry at his son's behavior. And it is normal for the middle-aged woman to feel hurt at her friends' lack of support. Acknowledging these feelings allows them to think about *how* to process them in healthy ways.

Such as, can the grieving widow express her grief through remembering the joys and sorrows she shared with her husband? Can the angry father use his feelings to help his son face the serious reality of his behavior? And can the middle-aged woman become aware of her expectations of her friends as a result of their behavior? In other words, can we use our feelings to get a better understanding of *ourselves* and consequently act more effectively towards *others*?

### Welcoming responsibility equals freedom

Welcoming responsibility and processing our feelings in healthy ways allows us to let go of bitterness or chronic emotional pain. It helps us be responsible for our own issues while others are responsible for theirs.

Freedom comes when we know we have the resources within ourselves to acknowledge, accept and process our feelings in ways that solidify our sense of who we are and who we are meant to be. It is not easy, nor will we have a life without pain, but it can bring us more peace.

*Arlene Van Hove is a psychotherapist with Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.*

# Charity provides no services

NEWMARKET, Ont. (CP) — Thousands of Ontario residents have donated money to a charity for victims of domestic violence that provides no services.

Founder Ronald Perrin admitted that his charity, the National Society for Abused Women and Children provides none of the services offered in a door-to-door and telephone fundraising campaign, the *Toronto Star* reported recently. But Perrin insists that his agency, which has raised about $116,000, is "not a scam" but lacks experienced people.

"Rome wasn't built in a day," says Perrin. He estimated the money has gone entirely toward salaries and expenses for him and others to raise funds.

Only two $200 cheques have ever been offered to domestic violence shelters, and both refused the donations because they questioned the legitimacy of Perrin's agency.

Federal charities officials have received complaints about the society from shelters, but won't say what they are doing about the group. A spokesperson for Canada Customs and Revenue Agency said new organizations need start-up time to get organized. By their second year of operation, however, they are expected to put 80 per cent of donations toward charitable works, he said.

Angry shelter officials say Perrin's agency, founded in March 1999, is potentially endangering women by falsely promising to help rescue them from abusive situations. "It is so hard for women to make that first call to say they need help," said Filomena Williams, executive director of the Yellow Brick House shelter in Aurora, Ont. "If they do not get help, my fear is that they won't have the trust to call an organization again."

Education/Family

# School choice and parental duty: returning subsidiarity to education

CC FILES

**Joe Klesney**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — With the upcoming American presidential elections, much has been made by both candidates about the importance they place on the education agenda. Political platforms notwithstanding, such national attention offers an excellent opportunity to revisit education policy from a moral perspective.

State monopolies on education violate the moral principle of subsidiarity by restricting or eliminating the parental role in education.

If we are to accept the principle of subsidiarity, integral to Christian social teaching, it is clear that the current systems of education in many states need to re-emphasize the roles of parents. Subsidiarity teaches that social groupings nearest to a challenge should meet those challenges first, before resorting to larger or more remote groups for help.

## Parents have foremost responsibility

The classic Christian teaching that parents are first and foremost responsible for the education of their children is a perfect example of how the subsidiarity principle affects a social issue. When a school supplies education for a child, it should be because the parent seeks this aid, by choice, from a school.

Freedom to act on their children's behalf is necessary if parents are to fulfill their duties. We can identify in Scripture the early duty of parents to educate their children in the Law of God: "and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up." (Deuteronomy 6:7) This biblical duty has further implications for the general education of children. Pope Paul VI further clarified:

"Parents who have the primary and inalienable right and duty to educate their children must enjoy true liberty in their choice of schools. Consequently, the public power, which has the obligation to protect and defend the rights of citizens, must see to it, in its concern for distributive justice, that public subsidies are paid in such a way that parents are truly free to choose according to their conscience the schools they want for their children." (*Gravissimum Educationis*, #20, October 28, 1965)

Addressing the moral foundations referred to by Paul VI, as well as the many practical issues surrounding choice, a conference was hosted by Children First CEO America, in Grand Rapids, Michigan on May 17. Speakers from states where school choice experiments have been initiated detailed the positive results. Whether they be vouchers or tax credits, or home, charter, or private schools, all facets were found to further empower parents in the education of their children.

## Vouchers give power to parents

Commenting on school choice through vouchers, John Norquist, Mayor of Milwaukee, said:

"School choice puts vouchers — the power of money — in the hands of parents. Schools wanting that money — whether public or not — have to attract and keep the interest of our children and their parents. Schools have to compete for our children every day, all year. And they will attract money only by convincing parents they will teach the children well, and only by delivering on that promise will the schools be able to prosper."

And thus a moral outcome of a free market is once again illustrated. In a free market of education, parents who are free to choose the best schooling for their children enter into a mutually beneficial exchange with an institution of learning.

The emphasis here needs to be on "mutually beneficial"; sadly, many of the neediest children benefit not at all when trapped in bad government-run schools. Dick DeVos, President of the Amway Corporation and keynote speaker at the Children First CEO America conference, remarked, "People, more specifically, parents, were crying out for help, for deliverance from schools that are failing to educate their children. Parents want their children to have the same dreams and hopes that you and I grew up with!"

## We share God's creativity

Newark, New Jersey, City Councilman Cory Booker added a distinctly Christian note: "We are all children of God. And reflected in God's image, we share His creativity. We need the freedom to let our children attend schools that can hone that creativity to the best of their abilities."

Civic leaders as well as leaders in business and education are increasingly coming together on an issue of vital importance. The Christian reflection of Paul VI rings forth with special force and clarity today: there must be "no kind of school monopoly, for this is opposed to the native rights of the human person, to the development and spread of culture, to the peaceful association of citizens and to the pluralism that exists today in ever so many societies." (*Gravissimum Educationis*, #21)

*Joe Klesney is Policy Analyst for the Acton Institute, a conservative Catholic think tank located in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It has been active in seeking cooperation between Protestants and Catholics on several fronts.*

# *The perils and pleasures of parenting*

Intangible Things
Heidi VanDerSlikke

At the supper table one evening my son surprised me by inviting me to speak to his high school Family Studies class about parenting adolescents. I thought he was joking and I laughed out loud. He assured me, however, that he was serious. I began to delight at the prospect of being unleashed for an hour in front of his classmates to freely discuss our relationship.

He reined me in a little, and reminded me that there was more to parenting than his bad habits and misdeeds. He also advised me not to show up with overheads, handouts, and a formal 60 minute lecture. Suddenly the assignment became a bit more daunting. I decided to start with a tongue-in-cheek list:

## You know you're raising a teenager when....

- Your car goes out at night far more often than you do.
- Your mother's voice keeps coming inexplicably out of your own mouth.
- Your kids no longer believe everything you say. (And you no longer believe *anything* they say.)
- You consider having the telephone receiver surgically removed from the side of your child's head.
- "Disgusting" describes a significant improvement of your child's housekeeping practices.
- There are three kinds of music blasting simultaneously from 3 CD players in 3 separate bedrooms.
- Your son comes home from a two-day class trip with hair like Malibu Barbie.
- Every program button on your car radio pulls in some freak station from London (Ontario, that is).

On the serious side, it was a chance to spend time consciously considering the challenges of parenting teens. We discussed some of the more difficult aspects of this time of life. From a parent's point of view, it isn't always easy to deal with the intense and rapid changes in adolescent development. While the child works at establishing his or her own identity, the role of parents is constantly adapting in response.

Every mom or dad copes with some basic paradoxes associated with raising a family. Let's face it, if parents do their job well, they pretty much put themselves out of work. When all the storm and stress has settled, the ultimate goal is to have produced an adult who is so secure in her roots, she's willing to make full use of her wings.

## Distinct pleasures

There are some distinct pleasures attached to parenting teens as well. It's a satisfying feeling when having a conversation with your child to suddenly realize you are speaking with an intelligent and witty young adult. To watch your son or daughter muster the integrity to stand up for what is right even if it means going against the flow is rewarding for a parent. And to experience the love and concern of your adolescent offspring during a time of personal need is a tremendous blessing.

Yesterday morning I watched from the window as my 14-year-old daughter waited by the road for her school bus. Her older siblings had left almost an hour before. We used to eat breakfast together, have morning devotions and spend time praying about the day ahead. Then I would put Dusty on his leash and accompany all three children to the bus stop. It struck me how quickly those days have passed. Our once neat and tidy "family schedule" has developed largely into several individual schedules. It makes me thankful for the evenings when we do sit together at the supper table.

By the time this column is printed, all three of my children will hopefully have graduated from their current schools. Come the fall, Jessica will board a bus bound for high school, James will drive to a full-time job, and Stephanie will begin her college years.

Still I take pleasure in thinking that no matter how old they get or where they go, they'll always be my children. Meanwhile, I have learned to appreciate a line from an old Carly Simon tune: "These are the good old days."

*Heidi VanDerSlikke raises teenagers in Harriston, Ont.*

Synod 2000

# CRC in Canada gets bigger representation on Board of Trustees

HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN PHOTOS (3)

*Not all the business of synod gets carried out on the floor of synod.*

**Harry der Nederlanden (with files from Henry Hess and Mark Volkers)**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Synod 2000 reaffirmed its commitment to bi-nationality by voting overwhelmingly to have equal numbers of U.S. and Canadian members on the CRC's Board of Trustees (BOT).

Currently, the board, which governs the denomination on behalf of synod, has 13 trustees from the U.S. and six from Canada, reflecting the fact that more than two-thirds of the CRC's membership is in the U.S. The new board will expand to 15 members from each country, and will take over the functions of the current Canadian Ministries Board.

## Few bi-national churches

The Christian Reformed Church is one of the very few bi-national churches (those with members in both Canada and the U.S.) that has survived over the last decades. Other churches have found it too difficult in terms of organization to operate in two different countries as a single organization. The CRC has been wrestling with that problem for a number of years. Last year a major restructuring plan was rejected by synod for fear it would make the bureaucracy of the church to complex and unwieldy.

The proposal before synod this year was considerably more simple, but it still raised objections, especially from delegates from Classis Erie, that it seemed to move the church away from direct representation and toward greater centralization. Several Canadian delegates, however, stressed that reorganization was urgent if the CRC is to remain a bi-national church.

The BOT is the most important board in the denomination because it carries on the business of synod when it dissolves. At present, it was pointed out, the BOT does not have enough Canadian representatives to enable it to do the work of the church's committees in Canada. The new structure simply adds more Canadian representatives to the BOT. Since the number of churches in the U.S. is much greater than the number in Canada, the board is no longer representative in terms of numbers.

## Power to pick and choose

This did not seem to greatly worry the delegates from the U.S. Another measure, however, added to assure other kinds of balance in the BOT, did worry some – even some Canadians. To make sure that there are a variety of skills and ethnic groups included, the new arrangement gives the board the power to select from members nominated by classis. The board now has the power to pick and choose and so to determine its own composition to some extent.

Clayton Libolt (River Terrace CRC, East Lansing, Mich.) pointed out to synod that the proposed change in structure before them was perhaps more far-reaching than the report pretended. It had not been before the churches long enough, he said, for councils and classes to study and discuss it at any length. He and some others felt that the church needed more time to reflect on the potential impact.

In the end, however, because Canadian delegates said that it would be hard for the Canadian part of the CRC to function under the (then) existing structure, which had led to the resignation of Ray Elgersma, the restructuration passed by a large majority.

In fact, later in the day, when synod spent almost an hour and a half debating whether to drop one organization from the list of causes recommended for support, Clayton Libolt complained that the restructuration proposal had passed in only a fraction of the time.

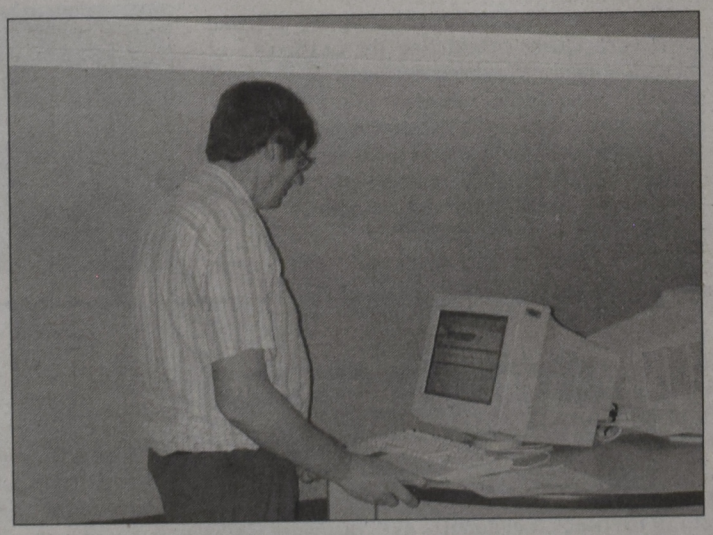
# A slow day at synod

**Harry der Nederlanden**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Not every day at synod is filled with the excitement of heady debate and principial stands. This afternoon I found myself nodding and quickly looked at the person next to me to see whether I'd been caught in the act. The fellow next to me hadn't noticed a thing. He was sound asleep. The reporter's voice was very soothing as it read off long lists of names. Even some of the delegates looked a bit woozy.

## Voting excitement

The only excitement occurred when votes had to be counted on some issue with a long title I had already forgotten. This is now done electronically. There are small keypads at every position that the delegates push to answer "Yes" or "No" or to have their names pop up on the computer screen on the podium next to the president if they wish to speak on an issue. Last time I was at synod, they were still raising hands and counting fingers.



*Whenever a vote was being recorded, the sophisticated executive up front gathered around the computer monitor to see how the vote turned out like Canadians at a televised Stanley Cup game.*

The computer system was being monitored by a student named Kevin. Whenever a vote was being recorded, the sophisticated executive up front gathered around the computer monitor to see how the vote turned out like Canadians at a televised Stanley Cup game. On more than one occasion, the screen remained blank. The votes wouldn't register. And the cry would go up, "Where's Kevin? Where's Kevin?"

A couple of minutes later, a winded Kevin would come bounding onto the stage, push a few keys, and synod would be back in business.

There's no more helpless and hapless sight than a bunch of synodical heavyweights huddled around a blank monitor as if waiting for some miracle to happen.

## Unexpected happenings

Unexpected things can happen at synod, and in unexpected places. At lunch I sat across the table from a Navaho delegate. He asked someone else whether he had heard how the issue of syncretism had been handled up in Alberta. I had just recently read a news report on the conference written by Henry Hess.

To demonstrate my up-to-date knowledge and my progressive attitude, I gushed on about how well that had gone and how open the CRC delegates had been, even participating in a smudging ceremony. He wasn't at all impressed. A lot of Anglos are too eager to get into all aspects of Indian religion, he complained. It becomes syncretism.

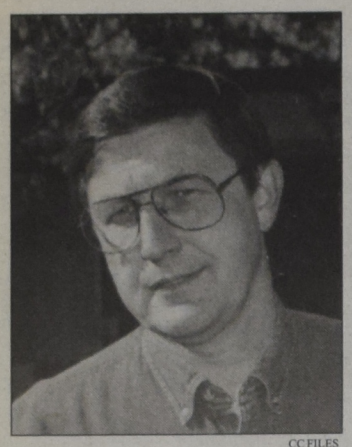
When he was a boy, he told us, the attitude toward all things Indian among missionaries and Christian Navahos had been wholesale rejection. "It was all seen as evil."

He had come back from that, but even now among Christian Navahos there is little tolerance for the rituals of Navaho religion. "But music is a gift that God gives to all peoples," he said, and he had recovered some of his Navaho heritage in his own music. "I can play it away from the reservation," he said, "but not among my own people. They want nothing to do with that."

Our Navaho delegate shared with us his appreciation for the biblical integrity of the Reformed faith, and we all went into the rest of the day edified and gladdened.

Synod 2000

# When does the church speak to social issues and who can speak for her?



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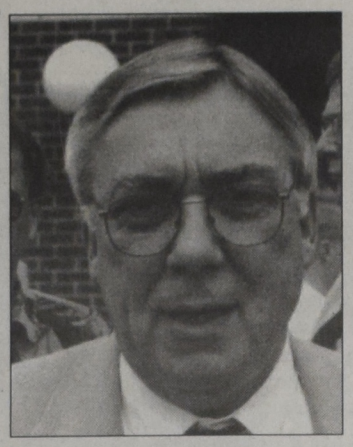
*John Bolt*



CC FILES

*Peter Borgdorff*

**Harry der Nederlanden**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Few issues raise as much debate, passion and theological creativity as the women in office issue. Most matters are handled matter-of-factly and routinely. The knowledgeable delegates who attended several synods can estimate how long it will take to get through certain clusters of reports and overtures on the agenda.

## Taking on a life of its own

But sometimes a routine matter suddenly takes on a life of its own, and before the president can say, "Gentlemen turn to the next item on the Agenda," he's looking at a long list of names of delegates who have pushed the buttons on their keypads because they must speak on the issue, and the seminary professors lounging at the table along the side are popping up like prairie dogs at a penny arcade.

That's what happened when the advisory committee of synod made the routine motion to commend the Office of Social Justice and Hunger Action for its work. Dr. John Bolt of Calvin Seminary stood up to ask whether this should be done so routinely, indicating that there's a lot of uncertainty about the limits of its mandate. Is this committee mandated to speak out on all sorts of current political issues on behalf of the entire CRC?

## Defending church's calling

Others quickly leaped to their feet to defend the calling of the church to testify to the implications of the faith for all of life, including and especially on issues of justice.

True, said the defenders of sphere sovereignty, but the church as institution cannot presume to take specific political positions on behalf of all its members. That's what has been happening in many mainline denominations and they've been losing members as a result.

A couple of delegates suggested that the office should speak out only on those issues that have been thoroughly studied by synod.

"But look how long synod has been discussing the issue of women in office," one delegate objected. "We've been at it for almost 30 years without getting anywhere. If we have to wait for synod, we'll never speak out on anything."

Dr. James de Jong, President of Calvin Seminary, pointed out that the Office of Social Justice and Hunger began simply as Hunger Co-ordinator and then evolved into something larger.

## Looking at systemic causes of hunger

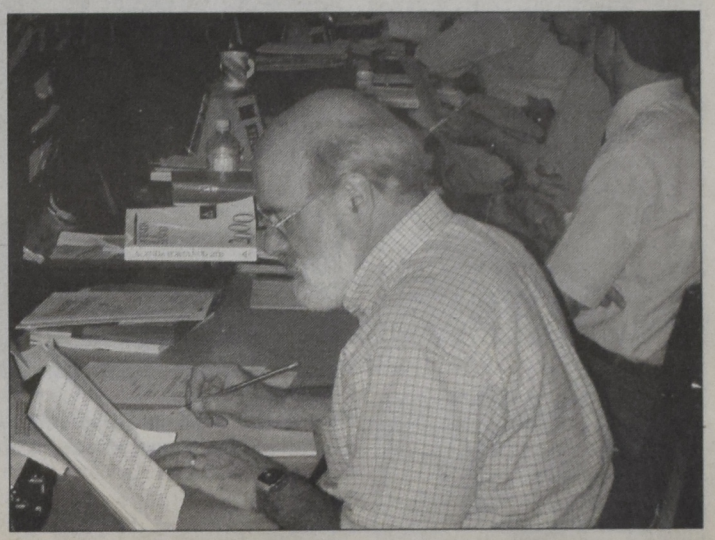
This was only proper, responded one of the delegates, for to address the problem of hunger, the church had to look at its systemic causes, which leads us into issues of injustice.

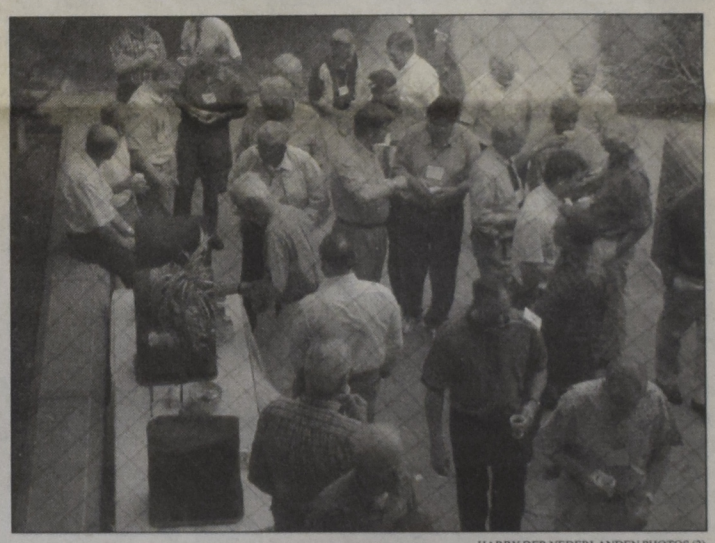
And so the debate escalated.

Peter Borgdorff, executive director of ministries in the CRC, tried to introduce some distinctions, saying that the Office of Social Justice and Hunger doesn't try to tell the government *how* to act when it speaks on behalf of the church but only *that* it ought to act in certain situations.

At times delegates seemed to be clearly speaking past each other, some hearing the cautions that were raised as a plea not to become involved in social and political questions. The debate revealed that a lot of misunderstanding exists in the church on this issue — and also considerable disagreement.

In the end, someone reminded synod that the motion before it was simply whether to thank the Office of Social Justice and Hunger Action for the work it had done. And that's what synod finally did.





HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN PHOTOS (2)

*Synod business proceeds both inside and outside.*

## Calvin Seminary plans to recruit more women, minorities

**Henry Hess/Mark Volkers**

GRAND RAPIDS , Mich — Synod approved a plan for Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids to recruit ethnic minority and women faculty members.

A major part of this plan will include financial assistance to pay for the doctoral programs of promising seminary students or graduates. Applicants for the $15,000-per-year loans must be "women of any race or ethnic group, or men who are African Americans or members of any of the ethnic-minority categories recognized by the Association of Theological Schools." Loans will be forgiven based on the years of service at the seminary once doctoral studies are completed.

Seminary staff will also:

- Look into faculty exchanges with traditionally African-American seminaries;
- Encourage current women and ethnic-minority students and recent graduates who have the skills needed for graduate study to pursue education that will qualify them for faculty appointment;
- Encourage and help find support for postgraduate education for capable ethnic-minority and women students and alumni/ae.

The $120,000 to $150,000 needed annually for the faculty exchanges, an additional academic position and a diversity incentive loan fund will be incorporated into the seminary budget as soon as possible. Denominational ministry shares will help fund it.

## Dr. Ruth Tucker appointed as Associate Professor of Domestic Missiology

**Henry Hess/Mark Volkers**

GRAND RAPIDS , Mich — Dr. Ruth Tucker is the first woman to be appointed to a full-time teaching position at Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids. Tucker served most recently as a visiting professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and as an adjunct professor at Calvin College. The three-year appointment begins this September.

### CRC: 'unique community'

During a one-hour interview before synod, Tucker said her introduction to the teachings of Abraham Kuyper when she was teaching at Calvin College "blew me away." Through Kuyper and Calvin College, she was "introduced to the CRC as a very unique ministry and community of believers."

Tucker, currently a member of the Reformed Church in America, said she will be joining a Christian Reformed Church in the near future.

Tucker said she is excited about some new courses she is developing for the seminary. One of them will be based on Christian biographies and spiritual formation.

Tucker earned her B.A. from LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas, her M.A. from Baylor in Waco, Texas, and her Ph.D. from Northern Illinois University in 1979. She has 13 published books, including *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions*. Tucker has also published more than 40 articles in various publications.

Synod 2000

# Synod leaves opening of offices to women to classes and local churches

**Harry der Nederlanden**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — As in many previous CRC synods, the women in office issue once again inspired some of the most passionate oratory on the floor of synod both for and against. What was before synod this year, however, by way of study report was something very different from previous years.

Beginning in 1973 and at several synods in between, reports were put before synod that asked the church to accept certain interpretations of what the Bible says about the role of women in the church, about ordination, about the propriety of women deacons, and so on.

HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN

*There were times at Synod 2000 that delegates again began arguing their cases for or against women in office.*

## Browbeating doesn't work

The report before synod this year did *not* develop yet another position on such matters. This year's report took a step back. It admitted that trying to browbeat one another into thinking alike on these issues by writing study reports that say, "This is what the Bible clearly teaches, and if you wish to be biblical, this is what you must believe" – this has not worked. In spite of all the study reports, and in spite of all the serious, faithful Bible study on both sides, it concedes, the CRC is no closer to achieving the unity of the mind of Christ in this matter than thirty years ago.

On the contrary. Thousands of members and entire churches have left the denomination in protest because they are convinced that admitting women to the offices of the church means a slighting of Scripture. Others have left who feel just as strongly that Scripture calls us to use the God-given talents of women everywhere in the church, including positions of leadership.

Looking over the havoc that has resulted over the years in the church's quest for a united, biblically-grounded confession on this matter, this year's committee asked, "What do we do – as a church institution – to bring some harmony, shalom, to a badly divided church?" Rather than make yet another case pro or con, therefore, this report sought a way for the church to operate and the churches to cooperate with the existing differences.

There were times on the floor of synod that this was lost sight of and delegates again began arguing their cases for or against women in office.

## Welcoming women to synod

Both Henry Baron and Clayton Libolt spoke eloquently and emotionally on behalf of welcoming women not just to the offices of the local church but also to the floor of synod. Women's gifts will not be fully utilized in the church, they argued, until they are used also in the broadest assemblies of the church. "Till that day," said Baron, "there cannot be shalom for us."

Others spoke with deep sadness and even a touch of bitternesss about the thousands who have left the CRC because they believe it has departed from a biblical teaching that goes back many hundreds of years. They also pleaded not to make it any more difficult for them to continue to serve in the CRC. Some feel that they cannot in good conscience serve side by side with a woman elder or minister, not even on the classical level. This becomes very tricky when neighboring classes begin installing women into all offices and they begin to work for various denominational agencies.

The report recommended, and synod approved, that the arrangement put in place by the Synod of 1995 be continued for another five years. This arrangement allows the classes to declare the word "male" in the Church Order inoperative, so churches within that classes are permitted to open all offices to women.

A church that wishes to ordain a woman but finds itself within a classis that does not declare "male" inoperative may apply to classis for an exception. However, in such a case, she would not be able to attend classis as a delegate, unless invited.

This is clearly only intended as an interim arrangement, and the synod of 2003 will appoint a committee to review the situation and report to the synod of 2005. Meanwhile, however, synod does not want things to simply continue as they have been. It lamented the fact that there seems to have been a moratorium on discussion on women in office over the last few years so that people have not been coming to greater understanding and unity.

In the past years, said one delegate, we have begun to talk only with those who think like us in order to pile up stones to throw at the others. We must begin talking personally with one another in order to try to understand one another. Various suggestions were put forward as to how such discussion and listening might be fostered. Another recommendation also urged the church to take up dialogue with those who have become estranged on account of this issue.

## A matter of wisdom

One of the grounds in the report spoke of the need for a period of time "to lower the passion level," but a number of delegates spoke passionately in defense of passion. This report made a laudable effort to move the issue farther from the centre of the faith. It develops a distinction between four different levels: the confessional, the moral, the wisdom and the disputable (adiaphora). Since what you believe about women in office is not a matter of salvation, nor a matter of living in sin, yet not a matter of indifference either, the report labels it a matter of wisdom. Some things are left to the judgment of the church:

"Wisdom principles help people pull together insights and truths from a number of spheres: the nature of the created order, observable societal principles and circumstances, and, in particular, the nature of humankind as illuminated by God's special revelation. Wisdom teachings provide boundaries and goals for human life in the presence of God." Agenda, p. 375.

People on both sides of the issue, however, continue to see women in office as a matter of profound importance, intimately related to the centre of their faith, and when they spoke on the floor of synod their passion came through quite clearly. Continued discussion is hardly likely to assuage such passions.

The debate on the women in office issue was scheduled for the Wednesday evening session and drew an audience of several hundred as well as members of the local media. Women were well represented in the audience as were seniors, but there were also entire young families present to hear the great debate.

Henry Baron's impassioned plea on behalf of justice for women drew enthusiastic applause from many women, which was promptly squelched by the president (with grace and tact). Only a small fraction of the audience endured to the end of the evening, however, as the debate stretched on for over three hours – even after speakers were limited to two minutes each (a terrible imposition for some). The recommendations were voted on point by point, and there were a lot of points, each one elliciting debate, or if not debate, at least speeches. On one point alone almost 30 delegates asked to speak. There were times, I believe, that some delegates weren't sure just what particular point or amendment they were addressing but they were determined to say something nevertheless.

I had hoped to send in my story that evening, but it was not to be. By the time the men of Synod 2000 ran out of steam for the evening, they were only about halfway through the recommendations attached to the report, and they had to continue the next morning.

There are probably some gaps in my coverage too, because I got so groggy towards last I could hardly keep my eyes open. Synodical delegates should get some sort of endurance award for surviving these one-week synods. On this day they sat through almost 12 hours of intense debate, not to mention the palavering that goes on over lunch and during the coffee breaks. They served the church well.

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## Synod 2000's new executive

Synod 2000 chose Michael Devries as president of Synod (see story on page 2). DeVries is pastor of Pillar Christian Reformed Church in Holland, Mich., and has served on synodical committees to study neo-Pentecostalism, and marriage and divorce.

Synod elected Norman Meyer as vice-president. Meyer is pastor of Brookside CRC in Grand Rapids, Mich., and has been a delegate to synod seven times.

First clerk was elder-delegate Henry Baron, member of Neland Avenue CRC, Grand Rapids. Rev. Jack Westerhof, pastor of Palmerston CRC in Palmerston, Ont., served as second clerk.

# Chatham Christian High grad earns All-America honors in track and field

CALVIN COLLEGE PHOTOS

*Joel Klooster (third from left) receives his fourth-place All-America award.*

**CC Staff**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Calvin College sophomore Joel Klooster returned home from Naperville, Illinois an NCAA Division III All-American in track and field. A native of Chatham and a graduate of Chatham Christian High School, Klooster finished fourth in the 5,000 metres with a time of 14:40.58, according to a Calvin College press release.

The top-eight finishers in each event earn All-America distinction. Klooster's finish was one of five All-America performances by the Calvin men at the national meet and allowed the Knights to finish ninth.

In finishing fourth in the 5,000, Klooster becomes the seventh distance runner in Calvin men's track and field history to earn All-America accolades in the 5,000 metres. Klooster's finish in the third-best in Calvin men's track and field history in the 5,000.

An electrical engineering major with a minor in computer science, Klooster carries a 3.97 grade point average. He was recently named a third team GTE Academic All-American in cross country and is eligible for GTE Academic All-America honors in track and field.

*Joel Klooster (left) in action.*

# Hockey Night in G.R.

***A story from one of our (the CRC's) expatriate ex-pastors, who shares his exhilarating experience of an extended hockey season down south. Do we, who have no team to cheer for, detect a note of gloat?***

**Ty Hofman**

It is already June and we are still playing hockey in Grand Rapids. That means only one thing — we have a good team. The Griffins are playing the Chicago Wolves for the Turner Cup, the trophy which goes to the best team in the IHL

***"Instantly the fans are on their feet, and we two old men, taking a lot of time, also rise up to cheer and ring our miniature cowbells."***

Our team entered the finals against the Wolves with high expectations. But things didn't go our way in the first game. The next game, however, was a different story. Though the Griffins equalled our shots-on-goal, the scorecard registered 4-0 defeat for the good guys. So Tuesday night the team is home — properly chastened and with its back against the wall. It is do or die.

## Hoopla important

On Tuesday noon my son Ron reveals he has tickets for me and the man with whom I share four grandchildren, John Medendorp. With Scotty, an up-and-coming young defenseman, in tow, we arrive early enough to take in the team warm-ups and the hoopla that goes with the game. The hoopla is very important because the fans must fire up the team, and the Van Andel arena needs to push up the attendance.

Things haven't been so good this year. After four years of record attendance of over 10,000 per game, though with teams that rarely made the playoffs, the attendance has "gone south" this year with the winningest team in the conference. How do you figure that?

## No cheers for the enemy

The Wolves are soon announced. Each player's name is called out as he skates onto the ice. No cheers or hoopla for the enemy. But then we are put under a spell: the arena is darkened, spotlights twirl and flash, and music booms down on us for what seems like five minutes (maybe it's only three). Smoke or fog spews from the players' entrance. It's almost spooky.

Our expectations having been built up to the kindling point, the first Griffin bursts through the fog to ear-splitting applause. After he has skated his circle before the admiring crowd, he takes his place on the blue-line, and the next player gets the same welcome.

When they are all lined up, a couple of attendants pull out a long carpet for the soloist of the evening, who will sing the national anthem. This is often a painful part of the program because one never knows what to expect.

## Murdering the piece

The Star Spangled Banner is a very difficult piece to sing, with a frightful range between the third note, in which a good bass can glory, and the climax, which is almost beyond the average soprano. Will she make it? There is also another source of anxiety: often the soloist isn't here so much to lead the crowd as to demonstrate her virtuosity. Tonight's soloist does a fair job of murdering the piece. On a scale of 1 to 10, my pain level is about 7. Francis Keyes, the composer, is probably rolling over in his grave.

That done, the puck is dropped and we begin to enjoy a fine night of hockey. The guys are really up for the game. They are committed to getting the first goal, for the team that scores first in this series invariably turns out to be the winner.

The pressure is immediately on their goalie, Wendell Young, and at the 4:05 minute mark a shot from just inside the blue line blasts past him, and the Griffins celebrate. Instantly the fans are on their feet, and we two old men, taking a lot of time, also rise up to cheer and ring our miniature cowbells. Eight minutes later our much loved Michel Picard, from Beauport, Que., scores to become the league's leading play-off scorer. The period ends at 2-0.

## Pepsi vs. beer drinkers

Intermission gives me time to observe the crowd. There are a lot of people missing — about 7,000 showed up. But it is a different crowd. There are as many Pepsi drinkers as beer drinkers — maybe even more. And most of the beer drinkers didn't start till the break.

Obviously this is a hockey crowd; the "wannabes" have found other ways to spend a night and their money. And there are Chicago fans, two sitting just two rows ahead of us, with Wolves sweaters and White Sox caps. They are real Chicago types, from the city of the broad shoulders — rugged, stocky, overweight, extrovert and, surprise, also drinking Pepsi. One has his cap on backwards and the other lifts his baggy trousers just enough to keep them from falling when he stands up.

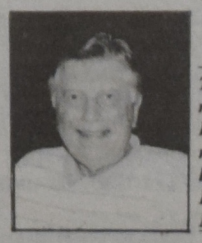
Just in front of me sits a real hockey family. Dad's cap is decorated with the autographs of all the Griffins players, and his ten-year-old son has the same adornment. They are right proud when we ask them if those are authentic signatures. They are. The guy is built like the Chicagoans. Although he too is drinking Pepsi, he has a beer-belly. He has rugged, tanned, muscular arms, one of which is placed protectively around his seemingly much younger wife.

## Wife or daughter?

She is good looking. I wonder at first if she's his daughter, but the minuscule diamond on her ring finger tells its own story. She removes any doubt when she snuggles up to him and smooches lovingly for a few moments. He doesn't remove the toothpick he's been coddling the whole evening. She apparently, unlike some person I know, has no problem with this plebeian habit, and he keeps it there for the rest of the game. When he stands up he has what is likely a problem for all beer-bellies who don't wear suspenders — sagging britches. I always feel vaguely uncomfortable when I see them tugging them up and never really getting the job done.

The second period breaks the wrong way and the Wolves score. But the Griffs are not to be denied. Picard scores his second goal. Chicago then adds another and we begin to feel somewhat insecure again.

But the third period is ours. Two more goals and the fate of the Wolves is clear — their first loss. The Griffins have come through. Picard gets the first star for the evening and Jani Hurme, our goalie from Turku, Finland gets the second one. And there is still hope for the Turner Cup to come to Grand Rapids.



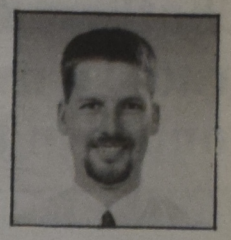
*Ty Hofman is a retired Christian Reformed minister who lives in Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

Comment

# *What's more important: Truth or authenticity?*

**Elizabeth Salomons.**
egs@smartt.com

**Two Under 35**



**Dirk Schouten**
dbschouten@netscape.net

*Dear Dirk,*

**Nineteen years ago this month** I stood up in the CRC congregation of which I was a member at that time, and professed my love for Christ. I've journeyed a lot of miles since then, both figuratively and literally, but my life has a tendency of moving in a circular pattern, and here I am, once again living not quite 30 kilometres north of that church and that community.

On that day, the congregation gave me the obligatory book, and inside it was a text. I'm told my parents chose the text for me, but when I asked my Dad recently why he and Mom chose that particular one, he no longer knew. I wish he did, because it's become a motto for my life. John 8:31-32 says: "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." That verse has become a personal motto by which I live. I often catch myself reciting it under my breath, and on my computer's screensaver at both home and work, I have the word TRUTH scrolling across in bright colours against a deep royal blue background. I put it there to remind me of the reason for my being.

**You're probably wondering where I'm going** with all this reflective talk, Dirk. I'm wondering too. But this is what I wanted to say, only I have to quote an author I've been reading faithfully all winter, named Kathleen Norris, to say it properly. In her book *Amazing Grace* she writes this: "It takes faith to write the words you know are true, words you are certain that you mean, even when you have to admit that you do not know exactly what they mean, let alone whether they are literally true."

Norris is talking about the place where poetry and prayer meet, but her words are true no matter what kind of writing you do. I would add to her thoughts that all writing should have an element of poetry to it, and also a lot of prayer.

**A close friend of mine once told me I took honesty to the point where it hurts.** Most people just tell me I'm much too direct. This column started out as an experiment, and I've tried to be as truthful as I can, even when that meant revealing personal feelings and thoughts I might have rather kept private, or when I've thought there might be people who took issue with what I wrote. You've been a great sounding board for the past year, Dirk. Ironically though, I look back at our first column, which I ended with, "... I'm beginning to think you might be right — that we are going to end up agreeing with each other a lot."

**I can see you smiling.** Oh well, it's been good. All the best, Dirk, and shalom.

*Elizabeth*

*Elizabeth,*

Your tidbit about the word "Truth" scrolling down your computer screen made me chuckle. It made me think of The X-Files' Agent Mulder, who wants so much to find the truth. It also reminded me of Brian Walsh, who has argued persuasively that "Truth is stranger than it used to be." No, I'm not trying to make fun of you, Agent Mulder or Brian Walsh. This is important stuff. Our active usage of catch phrases and idioms in which we refer dramatically to "truth" indicates how important it is to us.

*Is the truth out there? Agent Mulder of the X-Files, as portrayed by David Duchovny.*

**Truth is important to me, too, but for different reasons.** You see, I'd *never* have the word scrolling down my computer screen. As long as I'm at this stage where I'm skeptical of claims to absolute truth and knowledge, I won't put much stock in that word — at least not in the way many Christians use the word. Yes, I believe truth is out there and that it can be accessed and put to good use. But like Walsh, I see "truth" as being much more complex than what I was taught in church, grade school, high school and college.

**These days, I find myself focusing less on truth and more on "authenticity."** Although I don't have the space to adequately explain what I mean by this word, you can pretty well guess — given what I've written. Authenticity is about honesty, vulnerability, openness, and risk-taking. It's about admitting what you don't know and being confident with what you do. And it's communal in nature in that it's about asking for the feedback (and acceptance) of others. Sure, I'm using this word to refer to personal behavior and interpersonal communication but also in regard to questions requiring big, heavy answers as well as the space I want to inhabit in the institutional church and in my interaction with other Christians. Finally, being authentic is more difficult than simply speaking the truth. Shoot, even the devil can quote scripture.

**But this is really just semantics, Elizabeth.** I'm in no way disagreeing with your use of the word "truth." What you call truth I call something else. I think it was often that way with our writing, to be honest.

Anyway, to get back to what I was saying, this distinction between "absolute truth" and "authenticity" has an immediate connection to my life. About a year ago I got fed up with teaching Christian university students simple "truths" and began dreaming of a vocation in which there was more ambiguity and playfulness, and a whole lot of wrestling with issues involving ethics and justice. And I got what I prayed and asked for! Come this September, I'm off to grad school to start a master of journalism. My only worry is that after three years of life in Asia, a classroom of aspiring journalists will be too much "authenticity" for me to handle.

**Well, it's been good writing with you too, Elizabeth.** You pointed out flaws in the way I think and express myself I needed to know, and at the same time wrote a lot of stimulating prose. I wish you all the best wherever you go and in whatever you do.

*Take care,*
*Dirk*

**ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR YOUTH AND WORSHIP:**
***Interested in building a youth ministry?***

Applications from qualified (ordained/unordained) men and women will be considered. Ladner CRC celebrates her 50th anniversary of organization in the fall of 2000. God has richly blessed us! As we look to the future, we are under the Holy Spirit's conviction that we need to develop and equip the congregation and especially our youth for Christian ministry in our community. You are invited to become part of the development of a dynamic ministry team. Ladner CRC is located in the southwest area of beautiful greater Vancouver, B.C. (Yearbook stats under "Delta,B.C.") Send inquiries and/or resumes to: **Chair of Search Committee, Elaine Smit**
**phone: 604-271-0283, e-mail: elaine_smit@hotmail.com**
***or***
**Ladner Christian Reformed Church**
**4594 - 54A St., Delta BC V4K 2Z8**
**phone: 604-946-7033, e-mail: ladnrcrc@max-net.com**

*Elizabeth Salomons is a freelance writer who lives in Vancouver. Dirk Schouten teaches literature and writing at Kosin University in South Korea.*

## News Comment

### Nose for News

Bert Hielema

**PRINCE CHARLES** makes the news occasionally. He is actually quite a controversial man. His affair with Camilla Parker-Bowles has earned him the ire of the Queen, with whom his relationship is quite cool: they only see each other twice a year over lunch.

Mother Elizabeth does not at all approve of his love for a divorced lady: she fears public opinion. Something similar forced her uncle Edward to resign the throne in favor of her father. Ironically, this placed Charles in line for the British crown. But this is not the thirties, and even though the Church of England still will not *marry a divorced person, the* Church of Scotland may. So perhaps...

**BUT THEN CAMILLA** might not want the onerous office of queen, an automatic title for the wife of the king of the Commonwealth. So speculation galore, and all this will ensure that Charles and his love affair will stay in the news for a while. However, he also is controversial in another way. Last week a speech he gave was so newsworthy that even the *Globe and Mail* felt compelled to publicly — in an editorial, of all places — disagree with the thoughts of His Royal Highness.

What then did the Next-to-the-throne-of-England say that evoked this reaction? Not surprisingly it was a religious statement that drew fire from this secular paper. Apparently royalty must refrain from two things: politics and religion, so no wonder these people appear bland.

But the Prince took the bull by the horns (a vegetarian and organic bull, no doubt) as his extensive farms are pure and free from pesticides and other inorganic material, spoke his mind and so incensed the British scientific establishment that it called him a neo-paganist, a prophet of New Age superstition and an extreme mystic.

Here is how he started this startling speech: "The idea that there is a sacred trust between mankind and our Creator under which we accept a duty of stewardship for the Earth, has been an important feature of most religious and spiritual thought throughout the ages." The prince went out to say that by implication a "religious/spiritual approach to the natural world must automatically entail a rejection of genetic engineering and other technologies which threaten to transform nature irreversibly," a statement which really roused a royal rage.

**WHAT DISTURBS ME** about this debate on genetics is that scientific critics refuse to consider the very notion that there is an ethical/spiritual/religious aspect to this entire matter of genetic modification. The further we march off boldly into a genetically-engineered future, the more pressing the moral issues will get, because the defining lines between species are starting to fade.

Charles in his Reith Lecture quoted a philosopher who argued that the crisis we face today is not in essence an ecological one, but a crisis in the way we think. Said he: "We treat Planet Earth in this destructive, godforsaken way because we see things in a destructive, godforsaken way. That's how scientists have taught us to see ourselves: as random, purposeless bipeds, with an inherently destructive nature arising from our genetic inheritance."

So far, this is the essence of this princely thinking, which caused so much scorn and disgust among our scientific gurus.

Well, I must admit, that I couldn't have said it better. There are some really biblical grounds for this, too. Imagine the outcry if the future head of the Church of England had quoted the Bible on this. Hats off to the prince for his courage. I agree that most of us have stopped thinking of ourselves as sacred beings. The majority of church-goers believe that our souls go to heaven. And our bodies? Well, they might just as well rot away, never to be used again together with 'this foreign strand, wilderness waste.' So we have little difficulty taking the 'holy' out of the world around us and have adopted a worldview that strips the earth and its creatures of any sacred significance, reducing God's creation to a bank of exploitable assets available solely to our rapacious generation.

The entire matter of genetic engineering is one gigantic gamble. Take this news item: a German zoologist has found evidence that genes used to modify crops can jump the species barrier and cause bacteria to mutate. Commented a geneticist in Great Britain: "If this is true, then, it would leave us unable to treat major illnesses like meningitis and E.coli."

**AND THAT NEWS ITEM** about E.coli brings me back to Ontario, where Michael Harris is reaping the fruits of what he has been sowing. When I was in the US a couple of weeks ago, Walkerton-Canada was constantly in the news, not only on CNN but even in such a small town paper as the *Sioux City Journal*. The E.Coli deaths were big news there too because this danger is present wherever large herds of animals are kept, which certainly is the case in Iowa.

In and around Sioux Center, famous for Dordt College, all rural inhabitants have municipal water and country residences pay an average of $60 (US) per month — which amounts to $1,000 Can. per year — for reliable and E. coli-free drinking water, because rural wells cannot give that guarantee.

**IN CANADA, WATER** regulation is not nearly as strict. Perhaps we have been lulled into such lethargy because we have the largest sweet water reserves in the world. But all is not well with that water. *The Globe and Mail* had this head line recently: "NATIONAL WATER CRISIS FORECAST." The caption read: "Study blames declining supply on lax attitude, climate change." The article stated that pollution, habitat destruction, and climate warming will compromise Canada's freshwater supply so dramatically in the next 50 years that freshwater fisheries could disappear and drinking water supplies will be in a state of crisis. The immediate reasons are government cutbacks and the "tiresome juvenile turfwar" between federal and provincial politicians.

**I REMEMBER WHEN** Margaret Thatcher in England, the prime example how to govern Ontario, slashed the number of meat inspectors there. This could well have been a factor in the disastrous emergence of the Mad Cow Disease in Great Britain, costing the public untold many times more than the paltry sums saved employing these professional veterinarians.

Now history is repeating itself in Ontario's water safety. In the richest province of Canada, the Harris regime spends only $4,200 per resident in public programs, 25 per cent less than the leading — and poorest — province, Newfoundland, and 15 per cent below the average of the other nine provinces.

Walkerton proved that Harris' pipe-dream of less government by downloading to municipalities is backing up all the way to Queen's Park. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment, whose budget was cut by 40 per cent when the Progressive Conservative Party became the rulers in Queen's Park, warned as early as 1997 that shutting down its water-testing labs could lead to the kind of water disaster that has hit Walkerton, and killed possibly as many as 11 people. But the government of Mike Harris ignored this, as it has ignored anything that had to do with the environment.

**IT NOW IS THE LARGEST** polluter in Canada, and the third largest in North America. It cut funding for public transit, causing increased traffic stagnation and more and more pollution. It ignored pleas from rural townships to amend provincial laws which allow mega farms to be established in any agricultural zone even though they are the major cause of groundwater contamination. It ignored pleas to curtail the tapping of aquifers by commercial enterprises for export to the US, even though local needs can hardly be met.

Anything that can be traded or sold or makes a profit, no matter how damaging to the earth, is encouraged. Never in the history of the province of Ontario has there been such a shortsighted, capitalistic, creation-destroying, indeed, quoting the words of Prince Charles, godforsaken regime as at present rules in Ontario.

**ENOUGH OF THIS.** Is there any good news? Yes, there is. A report in the (London) *Sunday Times* is good news for all our readers. It says that an analysis of 42 research studies investigating the role of religion in health, in which 126,000 people were interviewed, has established that regular attendance at one's church, synagogue, mosque or Buddhist monastery (that should cover all our readers) is related to a significantly longer life. How much longer? A recent study found that those who never attended church had almost twice the risk of death in the nine-year follow-up period, than those who attended more than once a week.

This translates into a seven-year difference in life expectancy at the age of 20 between those who never attended and those who attend a religious ceremony of some sort more than once a week. Please note that "more than once a week." This implies a continuous throughout-the-week relationship with religion, such as Bible studies, prayer meetings, church choirs, etc. Apparently those who have only a formal, traditional tie to the church, do not benefit.

I hope this is good news for you. I can summarize this as follows:

* Religious people live longer than non-religious ones;
* The more church activities you attend, the more your health improves;
* The religious have lower blood pressure;
* Worshippers suffer less from heart disease;
* Churchgoers are less likely to get cancer;
* If you are a believer, you will be less depressed;
* Going to church means you are less likely to be obese (gluttony is a sin);
* It is not enough to just believe: you must actually attend services.

*Bert Hielema lives in Tweed Ont, where he is a faithful churchgoer, sings in the choir, is a member of a weekly church prayer group and is in excellent health.*

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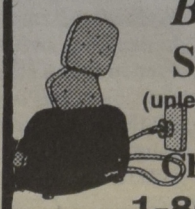

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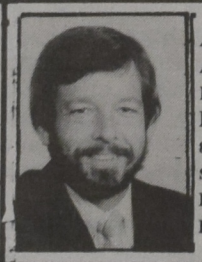

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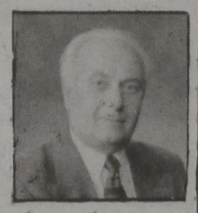

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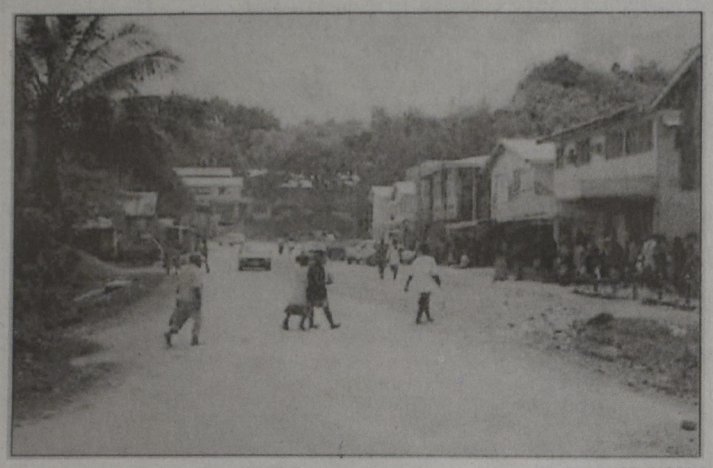
News Analysis

# The Solomon Islands: From 'ethnic tension' to ethnic war

**Vianney Carriere**

THE SOLOMON ISLANDS — When I left the Solomon Islands several weeks ago, rumours were rife that the government was going to bring in Cuban troops to restore order to this troubled island. It was, if anything, a measure of desperation. On the other hand, two different sets of peace accords had just been signed, laying out a process to quell the ethnic-based disquiet that has claimed more than 60 lives in the past 18 months.

Recently, according to news reports, Honiara lawyer Andrew Nori led an attempted coup that has seen the house arrest of Prime Minister Bartholomew Ulufa'alu, the imposition of a curfew in the capital, Honiara, and a suspension of all flights in and out of historic Henderson Field. Nori, a few weeks before, had been a signatory to the Auki peace accords.



VIANNEY CARRIERE PHOTOS

*Violence is taking the place of prosperity on the once peaceful streets of the Solomon Islands.*

## Rapid changes

Things have obviously changed quickly since I left. It is unclear from news reports, whether there has been an attempted coup or an actual one such as the one that occurred in neighbouring Fiji May 19.

In many ways, the conflict that has plagued the Solomon Islands, which lie east of Papua New Guinea and north of Australia, is a conflict not unlike the country itself: understated in conversation, steeped in history and tradition, fierce at times and somnolent at others, sometimes as gentle as a tropical wind and other times as barbaric as the cyclones that sweep through here during the rainy seasons.

## Ethnic tension a misnomer

The people of the Solomon Islands call their difficulties "ethnic tension." It is a misnomer. "Tension" is when people scowl at each other and make threats across a negotiations table. But here, people are dying, in a conflict that has uncomfortable elements and sometimes even the vocabulary of ethnic cleansing to it.

The official death toll is about 60 in the past 18 months, a figure much too low to have attracted the attention of the western world's media, at least before this week's upheaval. The actual toll is impossible to describe: there have almost certainly been a great many more deaths than 60, and one should add to that a good number of disappearances and the pain of the forced displacement of tens of thousands of people, the turmoil of a resultant depressed and ruined economy.

On the face of it, the "ethnic tension" of the Solomon Islands pits the people of the Island of Guadalcanal against those of the island of Malaita.

Malaitians, with a historic reputation for resourcefulness and asserting themselves, settled in large numbers on the neighbouring island of Guadalcanal, and over the years, prospered. They went to work, they bought land, they established businesses and commerce, and eventually they achieved an economic and social position, as a class, that gave them predominance over the much more relaxed natives of Guadalcanal.

## Fervently nationalistic

About 18 months ago, certain groups arose in Guadalcanal that are fervently nationalistic; they set out to reclaim the island for its natives, one way or another.

Unwanted and threatened, Malaitians left Guadalcanal in droves and went home, abandoning employers, businesses and plantations. At one time, it was estimated that the population of Honiara, had plummeted by between a third and half. The tourist industry on Guadalcanal, home of innumerable World War II sites and coral reefs beloved of divers, all but died.

Eighty miles across the water to the north, however, Malaita prospered, as enterprising people came home, some after generations on Guadalcanal, bringing their families, their money, their sense of initiative and in some cases, even vehicles and buses. Auki, the capital of Malaita province, normally a sleepy little town with a Wild West flavour to it, experienced the first traffic jams in its history.

New villages were born; families were reunited. If there was any downside to the influx at all for Malaita, it was in the strain it placed on the service infrastructure such as hydroelectric power, telephones and the delivery of drinkable water — services that are delivered haphazardly at the best of times.

## First shots fired

And then, as almost inevitably happens in a conflict based on "ethnic tension" which, after all, can be a relatively simple phenomenon, things got complicated and out of hand. Militants groups arose around narrower issues than the original ones, and other groups appeared to oppose the first groups; checkpoints went up, the verbal battles escalated; the conflict lost its easy definition as militants took to the hills, and then, inevitably, shots were fired and people started dying.

The Solomon Islands lack a national army that could have been used early on to impress a presence and restore order. Instead, the country relies on provincial police forces, members of which, it is widely felt, were quick to line up behind one militant group or another. There have been shootouts between militant groups and police, but they seem more for show than anything else. Police and the militants set up checkpoints around Honiara and maintain an uneasy standoff, a mile or so apart.

The violence is elsewhere. Both sides are taking captives off to the hills and torturing them hideously. In one case for instance, an eye-witness spoke of a man tied and trussed up like a pig on a spit, beaten, forced to eat excrement for several days, until he died. In Honiara while I was there, a headless body was dumped in the central market with a note pinned to it saying the Prime Minister would be the next casualty. The head has never been recovered.

The militants, originally armed with knives and muscle, are now much more dangerous. Early this year, a group of them arrived in Malaita on board the Ramos II, a ferry that services the island twice a week, raided the police department downtown and made off with the entire arsenal.

## Old weapons resurfacing

There are caches of weapons and ammunition hidden away during World War II, which are now resurfacing in the hands of young men, many of whom with their headbands and camouflage appear enamoured of the Rambo image.

Such is the history, and now comes news of a coup attempt that sounds as much, from news reports, as an actual coup as an attempt. There are very few westerners in the Solomon Islands and other than the odd foray by Australian journalists, most of whom cover the Solomons from a comfortable distance, there are few sources of information.

At a meeting of the Malaita diocesan council held at Bishop Brown's Auki residence shortly before I completed my visit, the Bishop sounded this cautionary, and somewhat prophetic note:

## 'Ethnic war' cat let out

"The 'ethnic war' cat has been let out of the bag and no matter what political solution is found, some will still follow it. While both the IFM (Isatabu Freedom Fighters) and MEF (Malaita Eagles Force) have some good reasons for their conflict, the two groups have both descended to a level of violence, torture and abuse not seen in the Solomons since pre-Christian times.

*Rev. Terry Brown, Bishop of Malaita.*

"Unless matters are settled very quickly, 'ethnic tension' will become 'ethnic war' resulting in the collapse of the nation in all ways — politically, economically, culturally, educationally, medically, etc. It is strange that the two militant groups do not see this possible future and that they are not more moderate and more reasoned. There is a danger that a pattern is being set for the future."

Given this week's news, opportunities for moderation and reason may now have slipped by.

*Vianney Carriere is the General Synod's Editor of Print Resources for the Anglican Church in Canada and editor of* Ministry Matters. *He recently completed a six-week visit with Bishop Terry Brown as part of a sabbatical.*

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1960 July 8 2000
"Marriage is honourable in all." (Hebrews 13:4a)
With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord we hope to celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents
**RANGER and JANE DEVRIES**
We pray that God will continue to bless and keep them in His loving care.
Congratulations Dad and Mom, Oma and Opa!
With love from your family:
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Jeannette & John Devries
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1960 July 9 2000
"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding." (Prov. 3:5)
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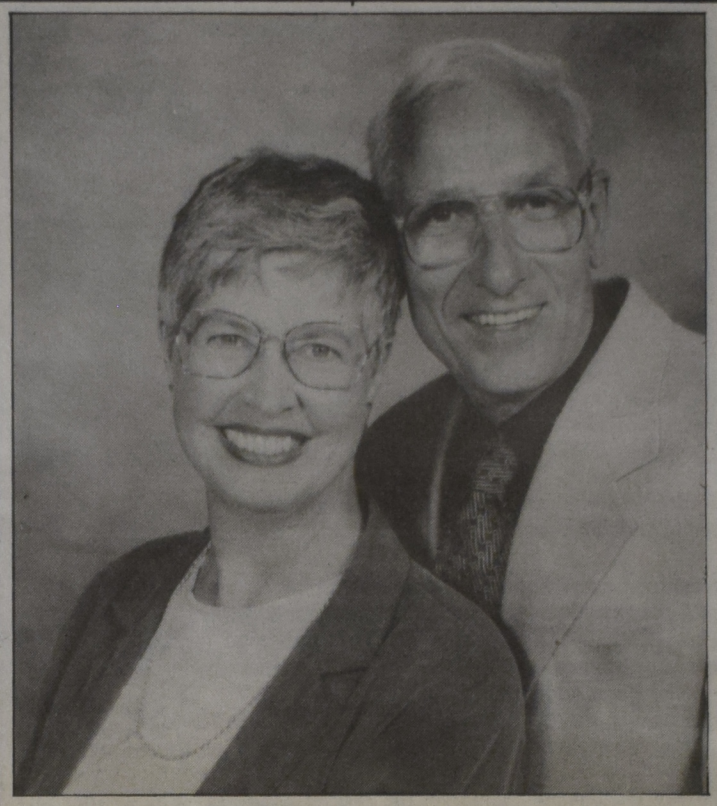

*Congratulations to Dick & Ena Mostert on their 40th anniversary.*

**DICK and ENA MOSTERT**
1960 July 9 2000

With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord, we, their loving children, would like to congratulate Mom and Dad on their 40th anniversary. We love you very much and wish you much happiness. God bless you!

Love from:
Phil & Darlene Mostert
Rachel, Christopher
Alida & John Tigchelaar
Allen, Mark, Sharlene
Marica & Eric Clarke
Henry & Nancy Mostert
Cheryl, Bryan, Jessica, Hannah, Bethany
Address: 22 Ambassador Dr., Hamilton ON L9C 2N8

*Congratulations to Louis & Hennie VanRamshorst on their 45th wedding anniversary.*

Mildam, Fr. the Neth. Drayton, Ont.
1935 June 27 2000
Psalm 90:1-2
With joy and thanksgiving we announce the 65th wedding anniversary of our dear parents, grandparents and great-grandparents
**HENRY and GRACE DUIMERING**
**(nee WIEBENGA)**
Love and best wishes from:
Herman & Janet Stryker
Simon & Rita Frankruiter
Bill & Louise Duimering
Marten & Grace Duimering
Harry & Luang Duimering
grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
Home address: 81-16 Conestoga Cres., Box 130, Drayton ON N0G 1P0

St.Catharines, Ont. Jordan Station, Ont.
1975 June 28 2000
We thank the Lord as on that day we celebrate the 25th anniversary of our parents
**KEES and ALICE VERHOEF**
**(nee VANDERNAGEL)**
Lots of love from your thankful children:
Kevin — Beamsville
Nicole — London
Jaclyn — at home.
Address: Box 281, 2758 Red Maple Ave., Jordan Station ON L0R 1S0
905-562-5977

1955 June 14 2000
"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain." (Psalm 127:1a)
With joy and thanksgiving to our Lord, we wish to announce the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents
**LOUIS and HENNIE VANRAMSHORST**
**(nee TEMPELMAN)**
We thank the Lord, who has kept them in His care and we pray He will continue to bless.
With love from your children and grandchildren:
Bert & MaryAnn VanRamshorst — Thunder Bay
Beth, Ashley, Kevin, Mitchel, Matthew
Fred & Alice Cramer — Thunder Bay
Carolyn, David, Richard, Lynda
Henry & Isabel VanRamshorst — Thunder Bay
Terrence, Sarah
Eddy VanRamshorst — Thunder Bay
Tyler
Evelyn VanRamshorst & George Duncanson — Amsterdam
Home address: RR 2, Thunder Bay ON P7C 4V1

## Classifieds

### Job Opportunities

**CANADIAN MINISTRIES DIRECTOR**

**The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) is seeking applicants for the position of Canadian Ministries Director.**

The person chosen for this position will lead a team that is responsible for the administration and implementation of the CRC ministry programs in Canada. This Director will also participate in the promotion of that ministry among the membership of the CRC in Canada and other supporters, maintain an effective cooperative relationship with a similar CRC team in the United States and throughout the world, and with many other agencies and organizations. The person chosen for this position will have an appropriate educational and professional background, experience in church-related ministries, and functional competence in theology and missiology. Management experience in Christian not-for-profit organizations and organizational leadership skills are preferred qualifications. Membership in the Christian Reformed Church is required.

To nominate or suggest qualified individuals for consideration, please send a letter to the address below by **August 1, 2000.** To apply for this position, please submit by **August 1, 2000,** a copy of your resume and a letter stating your interest to:

**Mr. Leo Van Tuyl, Classical Representative**
**Christian Reformed Church**
**Board of Trustees - Canada**
**RR 1, Wellandport ON L0R 2J0 Canada**

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Please direct inquiries to:
Human Resources Director, Redeemer College
777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, ON L9K 1J4.
Tel: (905) 648-2131 x4230, FAX: (905) 648-2134
*Applicants are encouraged to fax or email their application materials. Email: jvgeest@redeemer.on.ca.*
*For more information please see our website: www.redeemer.on.ca/about/openings*

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For more information or an interview contact:
**Brian van Staalduinen at 905-643-2002**
**e-mail: brian@staalduinen-floral.com**

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**The First Christian Reformed Church of Ladner, B.C.**
will be celebrating its
**50th Anniversary**
on
**Wednesday, Oct. 11th, 2000,**
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# Classifieds

## Obituaries

Nijkerk, Gld. Nepean, Ont.
the Neth. Canada
June 4, 1911 - May 30, 2000
The Lord has called home our dearly-loved Mother (Mam) and Oma
**JANNETJE (JANE) HOGEVEEN-HAVERKAMP**
Beloved wife of the late Hendrikus Hogeveen, at the blessed age of almost 89 years.
"I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!" (Ps.27:13)
Nan & Hubert Budding — Toronto
Bert & Gerda Hogeveen — Nepean
Cor & Jetty Hogeveen — Nepean
Jane & John Vandesande — Nepean
Henk & Helen Hogeveen — Kanata
John & Lettie Hogeveen — Nepean
Rita & Bert Hoolwerf — Ottawa
Henny & John Hoogeveen — Nepean
Very dear Oma/Grandma of 29 grandchildren and 56 great-grandchildren.
A service of praise and thanksgiving was held Friday, June 2, 2000, at Calvin Christian Reformed Church, Ottawa, Rev. Ken Gehrels officiating.
Correspondence address:
C. Hogeveen, 68 Sullivan Ave.,
Nepean ON K2G 1V2

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After a courageous battle with cancer
**DONALD CHARLES KLAMER**
was taken into Eternal Glory on May 30, 2000, in his 52nd year.
Beloved husband of Alice (nee Koomneef).
Loving father of Scott, Clinton, Lance and Lee.
Dear son of Dorothy Klamer of Hudsonville, Mich.
Dear son-in-law of Arie & Carla Koomneef.
Don will be sadly missed by his brothers and sisters:
Brenda, Lee & Linda, Glenn & Laurie, Tim & Wilma, Scott & Sue, Stacey & Chris.
Dear brother-in-law of:
Adrian & Kathy, Henry & Joanne, Fred & Evelyn, Caroline & Ron.
Also missed by many nieces and nephews.
The funeral service was conducted on June 5, 2000, at the Providence Christian Reformed Church, Beamsville, Ont., with Pastor Jack Van Marion officiating.
Klamer family address: 4659 HWY #8, Beamsville ON L0R 1B1

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Rotterdam Brampton
the Neth. Ont.
May 24, 1923 - May 3, 2000
"Give thanks to Yahweh, for He is good, His love is everlasting!" (Psalm 118:29)
The Lord graciously took home my beloved husband of almost 49 years,
**JACK VANDERKOOY**
after a long struggle with Alzheimer's.
Lovingly remembered by his wife Bep Vanderkooy (Kurpershoek) and his children:
Alice Vanderkooy — Toronto
Jack & Joan Vanderkooy — Richmond Hill
Kaes & Corry Vanderkooy — Peterborough
Herman & Pat Vanderkooy — Guelph
Miriam & Richard Hellinga — Waterloo
Paul & Susan Vanderkooy — Grand Rapids, Mich.
Dear Opa to 20 grandchildren.
Correspondence address: Mrs. Bep Vanderkooy, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., HT 604, Brampton On L6Y 5A7

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Aalten Terra Cotta, Ont.
the Neth. Canada
Sept.17, 1922 - May 27, 2000
"O, Lord Almighty, blessed is the man who trusts in you." (Psalm 84:12)
**HENDRIK "HANK" W. WESTERVELD**
Loving husband of Johanna (nee Rensink).
Dear father and grandfather of:
John & Irene Westerveld — Limehouse, Ont.
Nathan, Michael, Steven, Daryl
Herb & Michele Westerveld — Terra Cotta, Ont.
Lisa, Paul, Tina
Dave Westerveld — Terra Cotta, Ont.
Dear brother of:
Jan & Wanda Westerveld — Aalten, the Neth.
Drika Houwers — Lichtenvoorde, the Neth.
Correspondence address: Mrs. H. Westerveld, 15739 Winston Churchill Blvd., RR 1, Terra Cotta ON L0P 1N0

## Teachers

**BARRIE, Ont.: Timothy Christian School** welcomes resumes from fully certified teachers for a **one year posting in Grade 8** for September 2000. Applicants must be able to enthusiastically articulate their faith and demonstrate a passion for adolescents. Preference will be given to applicants with experience and training in **Computers, Fine Arts or Mathematics**. Please direct resumes to:
**Mrs. Jane Tjeerdsma**
**c/o Timothy Christian School**
**49 Ferris Lane, Barrie ON L4M 2Y1**
**Fax: 705-726-8571**
**e-mail: tcs@barint.on.ca**

## Church News

**Christian Reformed Church**

**Call declined:**

**Pastor James Poleman** of Smithers CRC, B.C. has declined a call to Westmount CRC, Strathroy, Ont.

**Classis Chatham** will meet in regular session D.V. September 12, 2000. This meeting will be hosted by the First Christian Reformed Church of **St. Thomas** and will be held in the facilities of Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, 641 Elm St., St. Thomas. Material for the Agenda must be in the office of the stated clerk by **Monday, July 31, 2000.**
For Classis Chatham: Jan H.G. Vandergeest, Stated Clerk.

## Church Anniversary

**ANNOUNCEMENT FOR 25th ANNIVERSARY**
You are invited to join us in the celebration of our 25th anniversary. God's faithfulness has brought **Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of Lethbridge, Alberta** to this point and we are thankful. There will be a social on Friday, **August 18, 2000**, a barbecue on Saturday and three celebration services on Sunday. Contact Hilda Visser at **403-381-8049.**

## Thank You

**WESTENDORP:**
We would like to express our sincere thanks to our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, relatives and many friends for the unforgettable day you all gave us on our 70th anniversary. Also thank you for the many cards, flowers, many phone calls and other tokens of kindness received. Above all our thanks goes to our heavenly Father for His protecting and loving hand, for He made this day all possible.
*Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me.*
**Mr. & Mrs. Herman Westendorp, RR 4, Brockville, Ont.**

## Job Opportunities

300 sow farrow to finish **swine operation**, located in **southwestern Ontario**, is interested in employing a **herdsperson.** Housing and transportation are supplied. Close to church and school. Phone **519-683-6068.**

**TORONTO DISTRICT CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL**

invites applicants for a **Math** teacher. This position begins **August 1, 2000.** Please send a resume complete with a list of references, a transcript of university courses taken and a statement of faith to:
**Ren Siebenga at TDCH**
**377 Woodbridge Ave.**
**Woodbridge ON L4L 2S8**
**e-mail:rsiebeng@tdchristian.on.ca**
**website: www.tdchristian.on.ca**

## Miscellaneous

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- 24 hr. assisted daily living care
-meals, laundry service provided
- English & Dutch spoken
**For more info, call 905-627-1108**

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## Miscellaneous

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- Loans of $25,000 or more
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- First year - Interest only
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- Second year - Principal and Interest to be paid
- Five year term, amortized over 25 years

**For more information, call:**
**Harry Eggink at 905-679-6219**
**Simon Schotsman at 905-679-3255**

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**NEW YOUTH DIRECTOR POSITION AVAILABLE**

**The First CRC of Chilliwack,** on the eastern side of the scenic Fraser Valley in B.C., is in immediate need of a person to help educate and inspire our youth. We're looking for an active and spiritually mature person with the gifts, skills and desire to lead us in our children's and youth ministries. The successful applicant will have the desire to motivate and teach/lead an energetic group of youth that are eager to discover and use their spiritual gifts.

For a full Position Description or more information, please call us at 604-792-2517, fax us at 604-792-2538, or e-mail us at firstcrc@uniserve.com. Application may be sent:
**Re: Search Committee**
**9800 McNaught Rd**
**Chilliwack BC V2P 6G2**

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**HORTICULTURAL SALES**

Ambitious wholesale nursery in the Niagara region has an opening for a sales position in the Mid-West U.S.A. Position requires calling on Garden Centres providing them with a complete selection of nursery stock. We provide a strong, brand name program, along with a very extensive and colorful promotional program. Person must be able to develop existing accounts and establish new accounts and have a strong desire to succeed. Strong communication skills, ability to work as a team, and sales experience is necessary. Overnight travel is involved. We provide excellent remuneration, incentives, and benefits. Please send resume with references and salary history with complete confidence to:
**John Langendoen**
**1000 Balfour St.**
**Fenwick ON L0S 1C0**

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Reformed Faith Witness.

## Events/Classifieds

# Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is $7.50 per line, or $1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

| | |
|---|---|
| **June 29** | Farewell for Bill Hordyk at **Wyoming,** Ont. Fair Bldg. 7:30-9 p.m. for all graduates, supporters and friends of John Knox Christian School, Wyoming. (See display ad June 12 issue) (#) |
| **July 1** | Frisian Picnic, 11 a.m., Pinehurst Conservation Park, Hwy. 24A, **Paris,** Ont. (#) |
| **July 23** | Dutch service, 3 p.m., Ancaster CRC, Hwy. 53, **Ancaster,** Ont. - Rev. P. Van Egmond speaking. (#) |
| **July 14-15** | Conference on Worship & Church Music, Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. For more info, call Deb Polman at 905-648-2131. (#) |
| **Aug. 4-7** | Institute for Christian Studies' Alberta Family Conference. "Story Time for God's People." with James C. Schaap. **Deer Valley Meadows,** Alta. Call 780-475-8031 for details or visit www.icscanada.edu. |
| **Aug. 4-7** | First CRC of **Rocky Mountain House,** Alta. is having a church campout as part of their 50th Anniversary celebrations. For more information, call 403-845-6067. (#) |
| **Aug. 11-14** | Institute for Christian Studies' Ontario Summer Conference: "Written Not with Ink: Living the Biblical Story," Maple Grove Christian Retreat Centre, **Thamesford,** Ont. Call 416-979-2331 for details or visit www.icscanada.edu. |
| **Aug. 12-13** | **Brooks,** Alta. CRC 50th Anniversary celebration weekend. Church picnic on Sat., commemorative services on Sun. Please RSVP to Lis if you plan to attend at 403-378-4571or llyzenga@eidnet.org |
| **Aug. 27** | Dutch service, 3 p.m., Ancaster CRC, Hwy. 53, **Ancaster,** Ont. - Rev. Kuntz speaking. (#) |

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# FROM COAST TO COAST

English Radio:
***Back to God Hour***

Television:
***Primary Focus***

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Duncan - CKAY | 10:00 am | 1500 |
| Burns Lake - CFLO | 9:15 am | 1400 |
| Osoyoos - CJOR | 8:00 am | 1490 |
| Penticton - CKOR | 8:00 am | 800 |
| Port Alberni - CJAV | 7:00 pm | 1240 |
| Prince George - CIRX | 7:00 am | 94.3 |
| Princeton - CHOR | 8:00 am | 1400 |
| Smithers - CFBV | 9:15 am | 1230 |
| Summerland - CHOR | 8:00 am | 1450 |
| Vernon - CJIB | 9:30 pm | 940 |

**ALBERTA**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Brooks - CIBQ | 8:00 am | 1340 |
| Ft. McMurray-CJOK | 8:30 am | 1230 |
| High River - CHRB | 6:30 pm | 1140 |
| Edmonton - CJCA | 6:00 pm | 930 |
| Westlock - CFOK | 7:30 am | 1370 |

**SASKATCHEWAN**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Estevan - CJSL | 8:00 am | 1280 |
| Weyburn - CFSL | 8:00 am | 1190 |

**MANITOBA**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Altona - CFAM | 9:30 am | 950 |
| Steinbach - CHSM | 8:00 am | 1250 |
| Winnipeg - CKJS | 9:15 am | 810 |

**ONTARIO**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Atikokan - CHAK | 9:30 am | 1240 |
| Chatham - CFCO | 6:30 am | 630 |
| Fort Frances - CFOB | 9:30 am | 640 |
| Guelph - CJOY | 8:30 am | 1460 |
| Hamilton - CHAM | 7:30 am | 820 |
| Kapuskasing - CKAP | 7:00 am | 580 |
| Kingston - WBDR | 7:30 am | 102.7 |
| London - CKSL | 7:00 am | 1410 |
| Newmarket - CKDX | 9:30 am | 88.5 |
| Oshawa - CKDO | 8:00 am | 1350 |
| Owen Sound -CFOS | 10:30 am | 560 |
| Pembroke - CHVR | 10:00 am | 96.7 |
| Sarnia - CHOK | 7:30 am | 1070 |
| Stratford - CJCS | 8:30 am | 1240 |
| Windsor - CKLW | 7:30 am | 800 |
| Wingham - CKNX | 10:30 am | 920 |

**NEW BRUNSWICK**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Saint John - CHSJ | 9:00 am | 94.1 |

**PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Charlottetown - CFCY | 7:00 am | 630 |

**NOVA SCOTIA**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Bridgewater -- CKBW | 7:30 am | 1000 |
| Digby - CKDY | 6:00 am | 1420 |
| Halifax - CFDR | 8:30 am | 780 |
| Liverpool -- CKBW | 7:30 am | 94.5 |
| Kentville - CKEN | 8:30 am | 1490 |
| Middleton - CKAD | 8:30 am | 1350 |
| NewGlasgow -CKEC | 7:30 am | 1320 |
| Shelburne -- CKBW | 7:30 am | 93.1 |
| Sydney - CJCB | 7:00 am | 1270 |
| Weymouth - CKDY | 8:30 am | 103.1 |

**THE BACK TO GOD HOUR**

**ALBERTA**
Lethbridge - CJIL
Thursday - 9:00 pm
Saturday - 12:00 noon

**ONTARIO** - CTS
Tuesday - 10:00 am

Check your local listings for cable outlets airing *Primary Focus*.

Saturdays:
**PACIFIC -- BC** .... 10 pm
**MOUNTAIN -- AB** .. 11 pm
**CENTRAL -- SK. & MB** ..... 9 pm
**EASTERN -- ON & PQ** ..... 10 pm
**ATLANTIC – NFLD, NB, NS, & PEI** ... 11 pm

**3475 Mainway**
**PO Box 5070**
**Station LCD1**
**Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8**

**FRISIAN PICNIC**

**SATURDAY, JULY 1, 2000**
**11 a.m.**
Pinehurst Conservation Park
Hwy. 24A, Paris, Ont.

**FUN FOR EVERYONE!**

**BARRIE FIRST CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH will be celebrating its Fiftieth Anniversary D.V. on October 7 - 8, 2000.**

Former members and friends are invited to a special Thanksgiving dinner followed by an evening program consisting of historical reflections and fellowship on Saturday, October 7.

Special anniversary services will be held on Sunday, October 8, (10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.) conducted by former pastors.

**For more information and to order tickets for the dinner, please contact the church secretary at 705-734-9166.**

**First Christian Reformed Church of Barrie**
**33 Shirley Ave., PO Box 875**
**Barrie ON L4M 4Y6**

***THE INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES***
invites you to attend:
**August 4 - 7, 2000**
**Alberta Family Conference**
*"Story Time for God's People" with James C. Schaap.*
**Deer Valley Meadows, Alta.**
Call 780-475-8031 for details or visit www.icscanada.edu
or
**August 11 - 14, 2000**
**Ontario Summer Conference**
*"Written Not with Ink: Living the Biblical Story"*
**Maple Grove Christian Retreat Centre**
**Thamesford Ont.**
Call 416-979-2331 for details or visit www.icscanada.edu

## Social Service Work

Become a part of our team of committed professionals providing loving care for needy children.

**Mutual Support Systems**, a parent model network of rural group foster homes in the Niagara peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties is searching for the following as part of its recent expansion:

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Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0
phone: 905-892-4332
e-mail: rklassen@mutualsupport.net
Visit us at:
http://www.mutualsupport.net

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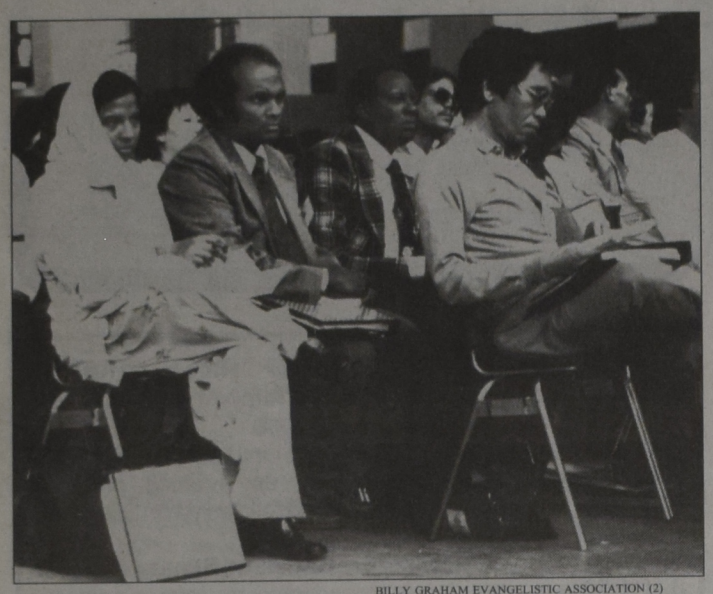
News

# Amsterdam 2000: Graham's last international event



BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION (2)

*Amsterdam 2000 is a follow-up to the historic 1986 International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists, in Amsterdam, which involved evangelists and church leaders from around the world such as those above.*

**Alan Doerksen**

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — This summer, Billy Graham will host Amsterdam 2000, a conference for some 10,000 evangelists and church leaders, which will be Graham's last scheduled international event.

Evangelists and church leaders from at least 185 countries will attend the conference, which is scheduled for July 29 to August 6 in Amsterdam. According to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA), this event will be an opportunity for Graham, 81, to "pass the torch" to the next generation of evangelists, and equip men and women from around the world to be effective ministers of the Gospel.

"I am convinced that at this crucial time in history, we evangelists need to have our vision lifted and our tools sharpened in a fresh way," stated Graham in a BGEA press release. "In Amsterdam this summer, the world will see thousands of willing hands from nearly every country accept the torch and go out proclaiming the unchanging Gospel in our changing world." The conference will give "continuity to the vision and commitment of BGEA which will live well beyond the life of one man," states the press release.

## Largest of its kind

Organized by Graham, general chairman of Amsterdam 2000, the conference will be the largest of its kind, according to BGEA. More than 75 per cent of participants will come from developing nations. Some will be receiving their first formal training in evangelism at the event. Financial assistance will be available for those who need it. As the sponsoring organization, BGEA has committed $35 million to Amsterdam 2000's goal of encouraging and equipping men and women worldwide to carry out the calling of the evangelist.

"The purpose of Amsterdam 2000 is to emphasize the vital importance of evangelism for the church entering the 21st century, and to inspire and enable the faithful practice of evangelism," explained Graham recently. "Our society is fast losing its grip on the Biblical moorings that made it strong. Men, women and youth have less knowledge of Christ and the Gospel. Just when evangelists are under great attack and are feeling discouraged, there is a greater need for them than ever before."

## A special calling

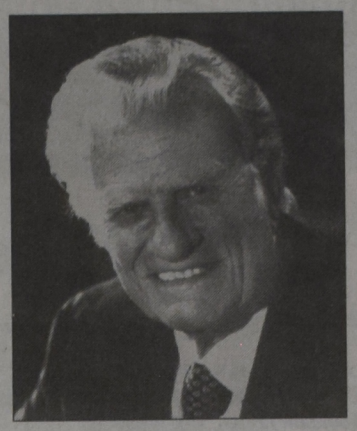
Graham defines an evangelist as "one who announces the good news of Christ. It's a gift from God; you cannot manufacture it, nor can it be orchestrated, organized or manipulated. It is a call from God. The calling of evangelist is one of the great gifts that God has given to the church, and is as important as the seminary professor or church pastor.... A great need in the church today is to recognize and dignify the gift of the evangelist."

The conference's plenary sessions will be translated into at least 25 languages. Keynote speakers will include: Graham, his son, Franklin Graham (president of Samaritan's Purse and first vice-chairman of BGEA), Dr. J. I. Packer of Vancouver's Regent College, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey, and evangelist Luis Palau.

Amsterdam is a follow-up to two International Conferences for Itinerant Evangelists hosted by BGEA in 1983 and 1986 in Amsterdam. Amsterdam '86 drew participants from 173 nations.

## Great millennium expectations

One reason BGEA gives for having such a conference this year is that "the year 2000 creates the backdrop for the conference as 'new millennium' expectations rise. Dramatic technological and social change, moral decline, injustice, and alienation are all compelling reasons for the church to use new, more effective ways to present the unchanging truth of Jesus Christ — the one Message."



*Billy Graham, host of Amsterdam 2000*

## Who will succeed him?

Asked who will become his successor, Graham recently said, "It seems the older I get the more I am asked who will succeed me. Well, the fact is that I am just one of many thousands who have been called to be an evangelist. I don't need a successor, only willing hands to accept the torch that I have been carrying, those who will present the Gospel to a new generation. In Amsterdam this summer, the world will see those hands, thousands of faithful people from around the world who will share God's love with people everywhere."

During the conference, Samaritan's Purse will be running onsite medical clinics. The agency will provide a backpack, two new shirts and a tie or scarf for all 10,000 participants. All subsidized participants (6,000 to 7,000) will also receive 10 articles of clothing for their families.

Samaritan's Purse staff will meet with evangelists in Amsterdam to determine needs in their countries and how the agency might work to meet those needs.

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## *New website for CRC Publications*

(GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.) — CRC Publications recently unveiled its new website, featuring a new design and its entire catalogue online. Customers can now order by credit card or church account on the secure site. CRC Publications is the official denominational publisher for the Christian Reformed Church. More than 50 per cent of its sales, however, go to more than fifty other denominations, churches and organizations. Check it out: **www.crcpublications.org**

## News Digest

### Vatican tells itself how to behave

VATICAN CITY — In an unusual case of an organization telling itself what to do, the Vatican recently told itself to tell the truth, reports Reuters News Agency.

Tucked into a document called "Ethics in Communication" is a section on how the Roman Catholic Church should practice what it preaches.

"First and foremost, the church's practice of communications should be exemplary, reflecting the highest standards of truthfulness, accountability, sensitivity to human rights and other relevant principles," it stated. "For the church to speak credibly to people today, those who speak for her have to give credible, truthful answers to these seemingly awkward questions."

Asked about this section at a news conference, American Archbishop John Foley acknowledged that in the past, the Vatican has sometimes been less than clear with the media.

### *A vintage catch*

LE GUILVINEC, France — A French fisherman landed the catch of a lifetime in May: 900 bottles of top-quality champagne. Tristan Gouzien's caught a container in international waters 288 km off the Breton coast, according to an AFP report in the *Globe and Mail*. He told officials at the port of Le Guilvinec the bottles were of Veuve Cliquot, dated 1979 and 1984.

Unfortunately for Gouzien, under French law, the champagne will be auctioned, and the proceeds kept in a holding account for a possible claimant for five years, after which they revert to the state.

### Take truck, leave beagle

OTTAWA (CP) — Spencer, the retired championship beagle, is home. He was 'dognapped' on January 5, when Shirley Dowser's pickup truck was stolen, as she was having dinner in a downtown Ottawa restaurant.

Dowser, who had also left her cell-phone on the truck, called the thief and said she didn't care about the truck but wanted her dog back. The thief told her, "The dog's nice. I think I'll keep him."

But in May, Spencer was back home with Dowser. The 63-year-old breeder found the dog at a Montreal animal shelter while following up a tip.